THE EUROPEAN

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ANALYSIS

IT has always been our principle to fight for a vital British interest, and the loss of our oil supplies would be a vital British interest. The issue in the last war was the exact opposite. No British interest was involved ; on the contrary, every British interest was violated by that declaration of war. The result has been the loss of British Empire, the triumph of Russia and the menace of communism. On this occasion, however, the life of Britain might possibly be at stake ; if, for instance, a combination of British blunders and Soviet intrigue brought all the Arab peoples—who could have been among our best friends—to such a blaze of resentment that all our Middle East supplies were in danger. At the moment of writing it appears that the timely intervention of Mr. Dulles may yet avert war, to the unanimous applause of the left which has spent the last few years in denouncing him as a warmonger. His move for a canal users' association was received by Conservative M.P.s with an enthusiasm they reserve for an act of folly so conspicuous as the promotion of an unnecessary war (they apparently thought it an Eden idea) but turned out to be an adroit move to re-pen the *mouton enragé* they have selected as a leader ; their profound discontent with this leadership, and its consequent necessity to appear as strong as Churchill, may have something to do with its present rage.

So for the moment the *mouton enragé* has been re-penned, but its hysterical stampede into the field of action—for which it was singularly unfitted by the design of nature—may cost us the last button of British prestige in the Middle East. We reached the final tragic-comic paradox when it was only the bleak prospect of an American-Russian combination to restore order at the United Nations which induced it to lie down again ; armed intervention was off for the time being, but a potential alignment was at least adumbrated which could only have been evoked by a full deployment of the Eden genius for diplomacy.

This Suez business may well become the final *reductio ad absurdum* of Eden government. It bears the hallmark of a method that is always fatal. Nothing was thought out in advance. Every move was the result not of plan but of impulse, and the impulse of a vain and petulant character. It has been clear for very long past that trouble would come in the region of the canal. If it was really necessary in cold and sober decision to meet that trouble with force

a steady build up of the necessary force should have begun from the moment the danger became plain ; in fact, we should never have left the canal. If, on the other hand, the present suggestion is valid that Suez is really not necessary at all, we should years ago have concentrated on the development of the Cape route by all the methods now being hastily canvassed in press and politics for the first time ; this we suggested on various grounds very long ago.

Did anyone in government ever sit down to work out calmly and clearly whether it was better to add slightly to our industrial costs (if at all, in the long run ?) by building larger tankers for the Cape route and pipe lines to the eastern shores of the Mediterranean in order to gain security and independence without war ; or whether it was better to risk fighting a war against the whole Arab world, with Russia behind the Arabs but without America behind us ? Was any attempt made to weigh up this situation in advance ? Were any of the relevant questions put, or enquiries made ? Was it thought out at all ? Or was it just fuddle and muddle, pique and prejudice, petulance and impulse, vanity and vain glory followed by funk and cold feet, culminating in that eternally recurring policy of " brag and scuttle, squaring up and backing out"; the brand of Eden and of decadence on the calm, firm, manhood of Britain ? The answer will become plain at last even to the Conservative Party. This country will not much longer endure the remnants of British dignity being thrown after the remnants of British Empire by the fluttering gestures of this silly doll who was dressed up thirty years ago as a *jeune premier* to catch the flapper vote.

Industrial struggle a greater menace than Suez

There is an alternative route to the Suez Canal, but for most people there is no alternative to living in these islands. That is why the action of Colonel Nasser is not nearly so great a threat to the life of the British people as the coming clash between the government and the T.U.C. There is an alternative, also, to that ruinous collision, it is nothing less than a change of system. Let us clear our minds on this subject before it is too late. The present system cannot maintain the existing standard of life for the British people, let alone raise that standard to the level they rightly feel modern science makes possible. The reason is that we depend on world markets to sell sufficient goods to pay for the raw materials and foodstuffs we cannot produce at home, and in those markets we face a progressively increasing competition from very hardworking people who have the

same machines, and the same skill, but a far lower standard of life. Under this system, therefore, we have to reduce our standard of life or starve : in reality that is the true dilemma with which the government confronts the Trade Unions, and which the T.U. leadership under mass pressure will soon be impelled to resist to the point of violent and disastrous struggle. All attempts to obscure this cold, clear fact are time wasting verbiage, but you will not see this plain truth printed elsewhere.

Rather than face a struggle which could bring these islands to the verge of starvation in a few weeks, a weak government will probably devalue the pound. This will purchase a short respite at the expense of the future, but not nearly so long a respite as Sir Stafford Cripps bought by his devaluation at the expense of the present. It will not be so long because our main competitors are back in the ring and, if their export trades are seriously inconvenienced by our devaluation, they can at any moment do the same thing. Also the spiral of inflation—wages chasing prices—has now gathered momentum in Britain, and the temporary bonus afforded to exports by devaluation is likely to be quickly wiped out by a rise of internal costs in addition to the immediate increase in the cost of external supplies. In short, even if the middle class is again thrown to the wolves by another sharp increase in their cost of living, the consumption of the new sacrifice will not long delay the pursuing retribution. We approach the hour of the final reality.

European Union as alternative to class war in Britain

The remedy is not class war. It is useless to bring out the middle class to fight the organised workers in the Trade Unions ; this clash would merely ensure that everyone starved the quicker. If the boat is already leaking to the point of sinking, it is no remedy to capsize it and drown everyone at once. The simple facts must be faced. Under the present system government can be effectively blackmailed at any time by the left wing leadership in the Trade Unions. Such leadership, if it likes, can get more than their share for the organised workers ; worse still it can exert pressure on government to pursue national policies which would place us at the mercy of a foreign power. For example it can try to dictate a £750,000,000 a year cut in our defences on the plea that the money should be spent in raising wages, even if government fears that such a cut would place us at the mercy of Russia. Conservative Government has again and again given way to the demands of extreme Trade Union leadership because it feared that

industrial strife would lose our remaining export markets ; in truth government surrendered because it feared that struggle would mean mass starvation in these islands for which it would be held responsible. Government now stares with the dull eyes of a doomed ox at the axe dilemma posed by the new T.U. leadership ; fight and starve quickly through immediate loss of foreign markets, or submit and starve slowly through pricing out of foreign markets.

There are but two remedies and the first is one that no English patriot, or any man of plain sense and human feeling can possibly welcome. It requires a strength in the whole character, structure and very fibre of government which does not now exist ; nevertheless, it could exist. That method means a real showdown ; not the fatal class war, but a national revolution of the British will to live. England could win if that will was aroused by great leadership, but at what a risk and what a cost. The risk would be death during the fury of the struggle, and the cost would in any case be great suffering and a lasting, bitter resentment between fellow countrymen. Also any such solution could only be temporary because others would be driven by our success to intensify their competition within the existing system ; we could only live at all by a permanent siege economy. So every motive of hard sense and common humanity requires the second remedy. It is entry into the wider life of complete European union. We should then not be dependent on export markets or foreign supplies ; we should live no longer on the edge of that abyss where any argument can bring doom. Those who ask more than their share could put themselves out of business but they could not put the nation out of business. The act of union must start with a fair and minimum standard in comparable industries throughout Europe. External competition will not exist in an Europe/Africa economy which contains both its own supplies and its own markets ; internal competition will be fair, and labour would be free to move within that great area where it wills. The selfish will be able to arrange their own suicide but not the nation's. The day of organised blackmail will be at an end. Science will be free at length progressively to raise the standard of life as the technicians multiply the means. A fair order can be maintained at last by a people's government which is subject neither to fear nor interest, because it has no reason for such dependence. What you thought was a dream, becomes now a necessity. That is the way great things get done in this world.

EUROPEAN

OPEN LETTER

TO MR. COLIN WILSON

Dear Mr. Wilson,

In your article of September 14 you achieved the remarkable feat of introducing four small columns of reality into the fairy-tale pages of the *Daily Express.*

When that newspaper started its "angry young man club", most of us were profoundly suspicious. For a newspaper group which echoes so persistently the "on and on and up and up" of the broken Ramsay Macdonald, which kids itself so firmly of the continued existence of the old British Empire — *Max he's in his villa, and a thousand miles away, and dreaming all the time of Cecil Rhodes,* to paraphrase the song—can only talk of angry young men in a tone of some derision. "Little Colin's in a paddy, now let's hear what it's all about."

The trouble with this sort of patronising — when they actually give you a platform — is that it is a two-edged weapon. You used it against Nanny Beaverbrook to some effect.

European civilisation, you said, is dying of laziness and for want of will : for want of a task and a purpose that would unite us as the Battle of Britain united us once. You then called for a new religion ; failing which, you said, Europe would "smash".

Most readers of *The European* will agree that you are on the right lines. But exactly what do you mean when you ask for a new religion — analogous to Christianity which you say has failed us ?

A religion — as I understand the term — claims absolute and eternal validity. If a new one arose, would you, yourself, subscribe to it ? That is, whether or not it succeeded in providing

Europe with the will to live, would you subscribe to its dogmas and believe they were true for all time ? I suggest that you would not. For your objection to Christianity is not that its doctrine is untrue, but that it will " never unite us in one great, tight mass ". In choosing your religion, if I understand you, you do not ask " is it true ? " but " does it work ? ".

You yourself demonstrate, I suggest, that no new *religion* could succeed in uniting us. For you, at any rate, would not believe it ; and you are not the only one. The lines of your thought suggest that you have read Spengler. In the scheme of that great thinker, Western civilisation has finished the imaginative surge of its primary religion and has not yet reached the refined pietism of its " second religiousness ". We are in the age which is preparing the secular myth of Caesarism. During the breakdown of the money-power it is not the prophet that is awaited, but the leader.

" Our people drift and die." These words are truer now than when Chesterton wrote them. We are bemused and corrupted by the 15,000,000 opiate newspapers that pour into our homes every day, lulled into idle complacency by the B.B.C. and stimulated into artificial hedonism by the advertising industry. But it is a hopeful sign that you, and other members of the thinking classes, are despite these forces beginning to look round for something new. It is none too soon.

What is wanted to unify us and make us shake off this blight is not a religion but a pragmatic political faith. We certainly have a task, inspiring enough and formidable enough to provoke the greatest response of our history. But first it must penetrate to minds which are dulled, disheartened and deceived by the constant stream of propaganda from the dual Establishment of imperialist self-deceivers and socialist world-improvers. This will happen when the coming economic failure of that Establishment exposes it for the fraud it is.

Our task is to work for a European nation that would be based on the unification of the homelands of European civilisation, and to apply our ingenuity, strength and faith to work within that nation for the defeat of the communist barbarians at their own games of competitive co-existence, political subversion and planned industrial progress.

As for our faith, may one suggest, without releasing in answer a flood of reflex invective, the name European Socialism ?

ARTHUR FALLON

THE U.K. AND EUROPE'S PLANS

by BERTRAM PEEL

AFTER touring Europe in 1946, the American writer W. H. Chamberlain made the following observation in his book *The European Cockpit* : " Terrific as the destruction has been in thickly-populated interdependent Europe, and great as the misery which followed this destruction has been, yet a physical rehabilitation of Europe is not beyond the capacity of modern science and technology."

Such guarded enthusiasm was also the mood of the impartial Pope Pius XII who observed at the time that the victors had lost as much as the vanquished. It was left to the non-combatant Sir Oswald Mosley to make the cruellest remark of all — that the only people who had actually gained anything from the war were the communists and the international financiers.

When Europe began to rebuild itself, assisted by immense quantities of aid from U.N.R.R.A. and lease-lend, a great deal of the increased industrial output was absorbed by the growth of government expenditures, and almost all of the rise in consumption was simply a recovery of pre-war standards. This is the retrospective view of the latest O.E.E.C. Report. But in the last three years a remarkable surge forward has occurred, Western European gross national production has risen by one-sixth and industrial production s up by one-quarter. Building slowly on the Schuman Plan, and working within the O.E.E.C. and the 6-member European Coal and Steel Community, Western Europe now shows every sign of recovering, almost overnight it seems, her former influence in world affairs.

Particularly is this so with industrial matters. An oil pipe-line from Marseille to Rotterdam, Antwerp and Wilhelmshaven passing through six countries is projected by Royal Dutch Shell at an estimated cost of £100 million. An electrified rail plan has been decided upon to unify the controversial and intricate industrial area that touches on France, Luxembourg, the Saar, Germany and Belgium. By a large majority the French National Assembly has voted for France to join Italy, Germany, Belgium, Luxembourg and Holland in the Euratom plan for common peaceful development and marketing of nuclear energy. In addition, member countries of the O.E.E.C. will seasonally exchange electricity " free of currency and other restrictions ". But most important of all is the progress being made in the establishment by stages of a complete common market between the above six countries, a decision implemented originally at the Messina conference of June, 1955.

In short, Europe is fast becoming a separate and independent entity, the new " third force " that the world has been feeling the need of in recent years.

It is worth enquiring where Britain stands in regard to this new development, which is in reality the most important trend of the 1950's. At the end of May this year the six nations met again at Venice, and it was decided that the draft treaties on Euratom as well as on the common market should contain provisions for participation by Great Britain and other nations.

This country, however, continues to stand aloof, entering with interest into the economic, industrial and scientific affairs of Europe, not as a European nation but " within the framework of O.E.E.C." A Commons debate on July 5 dealing with British participation in the common market failed to bring to light the Government's attitude, but the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Nutting, answering a recent question about M. Monnet's urgent request for us to join Euratom, gave a sharp answer which revealed much and was greatly to the point. He said " Notwithstanding what has been said by M. Monnet, the plan as it stands is incompatible with the interests of the U.K. because Euratom is to have a monopoly of the ownership and distribution of raw materials and will fix prices and control the use of these materials which it sells to outside countries. That is not compatible with United Kingdom interests, but we hope the Euratom project will develop complementary-wise with that of O.E.E.C. in which we are already playing a full part."

Do we, as a nation, really mean to show such snooty righteousness

when we are " in mortal peril " of creeping poverty as a result of losing markets because of our inflation ? Are we really so keen for freedom of trade in a world contest in which we are losing markets and contracts and watching the motor car industries with an anxious disbelief ? The Ministerial Council of O.E.E.C. under the chairmanship of Mr. Harold Macmillan has now arranged to draft a statute for a European Nuclear Energy Agency within six months of mid-July. It is difficult to believe that such an organisation is anything but a truculent rival to the *fait accompli* of the Euratom plan.

Britain's whole approach to world trade seems to indicate a call for more and more free trading, while attempting the device formerly confined to the politico-military sphere, of maintaining the balance of power. We reside at the centre of a triangle of economic ties with the U.S.A., the Commonwealth and Europe, with allegiances other than economic providing ample scope for diplomatic variation. Such would appear to be the design of our trade relations.

In practice, the U.S.A. offers a negligible market for our goods and, outside the luxury trade, a good deal of what has been taken has been allowed in only after considerable publicity and protest from the British side. An order for three electric transformers for the Tennessee Valley Authority still makes news in the national press. After all, there is no need and no reason for America to buy from us.

In regard to the Commonwealth, our links and obligations are worthy of new examination, for there have been numerous indications of late that pure expediency may be the only force really holding the Commonwealth together. At this summer's Prime Ministers' Conference " imperial preference was not among the subjects discussed ", according to the official statement afterwards, and (on trade links between the Commonwealth and a common European market) " the Prime Ministers were informed of various arrangements being made or thought of in Europe, but there was little discussion ". Since there was also very little discussion about the new Russian Trade approach it may reasonably be said that, as far as maintaining Commonwealth trade links is concerned, the conference was a masterpiece of thin ice-skating.

The only thing insisted upon was that Britain was vitally responsible for investing in the Commonwealth. Since to do this we must earn a substantial payments surplus, the prospects are uncertain if not dim indeed. A moment of reflection on some of the main Commonwealth countries in turn will indicate a loosening of ties, politically if not economically. The Prime Minister who appeals

most fervently for Commonwealth unity is Mr. Menzies, yet the cold fact is that in the last twelve months Australia has increased her trade with Japan, Germany and the U.S.A. whilst decreasing her trade with Great Britain and Canada.

Any notion of being good trading friends with everybody has no basis in fact. Moreover, the one country that we refuse to have anything to do with is the European nation of Germany, whom we are justified in regarding as our deadliest economic enemy as long as we do not bury the hatchet in the way the French, in so marked a manner, have done. Underneath the philosophic and diplomatic antagonism, it was nationalistic competition in production and markets that brought upon Europe the disaster already referred to. Nationalism in Europe is quite dead, and the idea has arrived of the Continent existing as an economic whole.

And now comes a new development from the East, offers of trade and an all-Europe Euratom scheme. Such an offer would, presumably, link the all-communist nuclear agency to the Euratom plan as it stands, and constitutes an attempt, perhaps, to secure a large share in atomic business in the West. Certainly Mr. Shepilov's proposal followed amazingly swift upon the French National Assembly's approval of France joining Euratom.

It is curious that when the big trading nations of the capitalist world are eyeing each other like hawks, prior to the economic showdown that would already have occurred but for the Second World War, the communists should offer us the lifeline of trade with China and Russia.

Now, it is a fact well-known on both sides that communism in the East has been patiently waiting for the economic collapse of capitalism in the West ever since 1917. This has been the main plank of the entire policy towards the West since that date, and it is possible that, having decided that there shall be an end to the arms race, it sees capitalism about to have a last glorious fling before destroying itself.

Although the outlook for Britain is not rosy, yet America and Germany and other industrial nations are prospering in some measure and not yet ready to collapse. Possibly it is thought by some that Great Britain is not yet ready to collapse, but again, communism may take a different view. True or not, it apparently suits them to keep Britain fighting for survival in world trade.

It would not be unreasonable suspicion to detect a hint of guile in the following comment by an organisation called the British Council for the Promotion of International Trade. After the announcement

that between 1½ and 2 million pounds worth of trade enquiries had been placed by British firms at the Poznan Fair, they say :

> " In Britain a phase of greatly increased activity in the China trade is hovering on the brink between promise and performance. In Germany, as in some Middle Eastern markets, this stage seems to have been passed ; the shape of future commerce is becoming clear. This could still be true of Britain by the autumn, if full advantage is taken of the present spate of Chinese demands and the fluid state of the restrictions. At a moment when other markets for basic capital equipment are shrinking there can be no question of the commercial desirability of securing an equal foothold with Continental competitors in trade offered in these specific terms. There is an abundance of warning signs of what may happen if the opportunity is neglected. France has issued licences under the exceptions procedure for the export of power cable to China. Negotiations are in progress in Switzerland for the purchase of gas turbine generators. Electrical and heavy engineering, iron and steel and machine tools are strongly represented in the Austrian trade mission which left for Peking towards the end of June."

Could it be that the joint idea of Russia and China is to tempt the industrial nations of the West into a trade net while the satellites expand their interests in the Middle East, and in that way bag the lot at one go ? By this means they could have us all fighting each other for the chance to build up their economy (especially China's) and then after a while could just quietly drop us. From such a let-down, the same industrial nations might, with any luck, never recover.

Returning to our subject, United Kingdom trade with Europe has for some years now been at a steady figure of 30 per cent of her total trade, both for imports and exports, with a tendency to increase very slightly. This might be said to reflect the United Kingdom's general attitude to Europe, showing as it does that we are very interested without being at all keen about seriously involving ourselves.

In view of our uniquely precarious position, we would be well advised to ask if this figure of 30 per cent might be substantially increased now, or even if we should not cast our entire lot with Europe.

Averse as anybody is to putting all eggs in the same basket, balance of power economics went out with nationalism in Europe and, in the world as a whole, the idea of " group " is now with us, being viewed as a practical step towards the ultimate achievement of world unity, which is now thought to be too big a step to take in one move. In

any case, to return now to the business of individual agreements and controls would be a retrograde step, and contributes nothing towards avoiding a repetition of between-war trade anomalies.

The United Kingdom's spiritual and cultural ties are 100 per cent with Europe ; we may soon find it highly desirable to make our economic ties 100 per cent also. The question of finding an outside market for the immense combined energy thus made available in the nation of Europe would find its long-term answer in the limitless space of Africa. The concept of Europe-Africa is another subject and demands, first, the acceptance of the idea of Europe as a nation, which is now in process of practical formation. The idea constitutes at least a positive attempt to answer Europe's industrial problems and, up to the time of going to press, no answer at all has yet been offered for Britain's industrial problems, beyond a repetition of the exhortations of the past ten years. " Export or die " provides no answer now.

For us to maintain a " liberal " outlook on international commerce is to deny that our present situation is the necessary, but hitherto delayed, consequence of what has been happening to the United Kingdom for the past fifty years. We now have to decide whether to go all-out for a diplomacy intended to achieve internationalism of one sort or another, or whether to take the half-way step of uniting with the Continent to which at one time we were joined completely. Upon our choice may depend whether we sink or swim.

SONG FOR ANDRE CHENIER

(1762—1794)

by ROBERT BRASILLACH

Upright on the heavy cart,
Across a Paris overhot,
Forehead pale from prisonment,
At heart Orpheus' last song,
You journeyed to the scaffold's step,
My brother of the open shirt.

In the prison where waters ooze,
Near to you, lightweight heroes,
Who were Tircis or Amyntas,
Laughed at those who judged them,
Refused to cry or to complain,
And at black dangers smiled.

The candle cast upon the walls
Drifting shadows as at sea.
Cards and impure sports
Gave life to days that passed,
But you, you dreamed of a lot less hard
And sang of prisoners young.

The EUROPEAN

The sunshine of the isles of Greece
Rayed in the rainy sky,
Pierced the windows thickly set,
And the girls of beautiful hair
Swam round you ceaselessly
On the waves and with the gods.

In the dark night you longed
For one more dawn to light you
So as to soften history
With countless just men slain,
To embark upon your memory
So many treasures ready to be drowned.

With the surges of adventure,
Across different days,
Hours vibrant or obscure,
A century and a half has passed away,
The season now is still less sure,
This is the time of André Chénier.

Into the prison barred and full
Another world has disappeared.
O black sun of our suffering,
Another crowd is in the street —
As in the old week,
Demanding always that one kill.

In the cell where the water oozes
Another than you, seated, stays,
Despising shouts and plaints,
Evoking happinesses flown,
Reanimating in his jail,
Like you, the seas of other times.

SONG FOR ANDRE CHENIER

On the reverse of a rampart somewhere,
To the ends of the suburbs of our towns,
Near any walls that stand,
The guns of our mobile guards
Beat down at the game of chance
Our brothers of the civil wars.

I hear in the black corridors
Footsteps resound that are all too like
To those that you still listen for,
Even now, in your pale sleep,
And like you at night I lie
With my true sun in my heart.

Near to us all, resuscitated,
Heart filled with angers just,
In the night you are heard climbing
From the bottom of the shadows cold and clear,
O brother of the bleeding summers,
O blood too pure of the old wars :

And those whom they lead to the post,
In the early morning, frozen,
Forehead pale from prison,
At heart Orpheus' last song —
You give your hand without a word,
O my brother of the open shirt.

(translated literally by DESMOND STEWART)

FRANZ MARC

An Artist of our Time

by ALASTAIR HARPER

FRANZ MARC was killed by allied artillery fire on the Somme in 1916. He was thirty-six years old, and those who lived and fought alongside him speak of his courage and his indifference to death.

Marc is one of the most famous of contemporary German painters. He is the brightest star in the artistic firmament for great numbers of those young Germans who concern themselves with the things of the mind ; the zeal with which he is worshipped in those quarters springs from something more than a mere academic and interpretative approach. He calls upon something deep and rooted in our people, and presents it in a style that is of our time and of none other. To those for whom a rebirth of the Faustian spirit constitutes a *summum bonum*, Marc is more than a pleasure, he is a prophet.

His father was a Munich painter, his mother a Frenchwoman from Alsace. His father sought to dissuade him from the life of an artist, but in 1900 Marc began to study under the celebrated Professors Haekl and von Dietz at the Munich Academy, where his progress until 1903, when he visited Brittany, was not lightened by any recognition or success. His paintings of this period, of relatives and friends and landscapes, are of no importance, the trivialities that one expects of a student.

In the compass of his short life Marc passed from an almost naturalistic style of painting to the artistic mode inadequately referred to as abstract.

France, and Paris in particular, confirmed his zeal to paint. The works of the Impressionists stimulated a mind already receptive to the influence of any art form contingent upon the modern situation. A little watercolour, *Café Chantant*, 1903, reveals Marc in his Impressionist phase. He was, however, too strongly charged with his own genius and too much a man of his day to become a mere embroiderer of styles, and the years which preceded 1908 were years of searching and self doubts for him. The admission that " only Van Gogh has an affinity with me " shows how far removed he was at this point in his career from achieving

the certainty of purpose which was to be the climate of his brief summer. In Munich he found few colleagues of his own turn of mind ; and it was at this period he adopted the animal motif which he was to invest with such meaning in the years to come. Not long before his death in 1916, he wrote : " The impure men and women who surrounded me (particularly the men) did not arouse any of my good feelings, whilst the natural feeling for life possessed by animals set in vibration everything good in me."

Marc's artistic career began in the year 1904 ; even in this, his earliest period, the salient elements of his style are visible. With his concentration on the painting of animals, the organic structure of which he studied in the Munich Zoo, came his own particular style. It was at this stage that Marc became obsessed with the simplification of form. In his own words, " Everything individual and casual falls away, and there is a simplification to type, enhancing biocentricity, a real return to nature which the romantic revival could not equal ". This idea he expressed in both stone and canvas, and brought it to its climax in 1907 in his *Great Deer Frieze.* For him it had become apparent that truth and reality were not identical ; he was an idealist, and had come to doubt that there was an ultimate validity in the perceptions of the senses.

The mode of simplification which Marc employed was bent upon achieving an artistic impression of the animal which was abstract. He was not attempting to present a type, but rather the inner life and being of the animal. " Is there any more mysterious idea for an artist than the conception of how nature is mirrored in the eyes of an animal ? How does a horse see the world, or an eagle, or a doe, or a dog ? What relation has a doe to our picture of the world ? Does it make any logical or artistic sense to paint the doe as it appears to our perspective vision or in cubistic form, because we feel the world cubistically? " *

Not until 1910 did Marc achieve the fulfilment of the technical means to express himself. This came about through his meeting with the Russian artist Kandinsky, and to a lesser extent with Delauney, Jawlensky and Macke, the former of whom Marc continued to correspond with after the *Blaue Reiter* (The Blue Horsemen), which was the efflorescence of this union, had dispersed. The *Blaue Reiter*, if they ever possessed any cohesion, possessed it in the common realisation that only subjective art

* *Briefe.*

could reach beyond the individual and. enter into the regions of the metaphysic, where resided a truer representation of the world. Mysticism, folk-lore, a violent, Slavic love of colour, a use of decoration, the element of expressionism and considerable traces of cubism, all unite in the circle of the *Blaue Reiter*. What each artist was responsible for in the compounding of this exotic unity we can only guess, but it is clear that Marc largely gave the element of the metaphysic, and received a concept of colour which he was later to use. Henceforth it was proclaimed by Marc and his colleagues — especially Kandinsky — that colour was to exist as an element in its own right, unhampered by the requirements of the form to which it was attached. This process of separating the elements of the art and rating them equally was a concept which Marc later discarded.

Each of the contributors to the circle was more or less engaged in all the fields of activity and the constitution never approached the hierarchical organisation of the *Kulturkreis* of Stefan George. The metaphysical influence of Marc was greater than that exerted by the others ; as he remarked in a letter to Delauney, " Only today can art be metaphysical, and it will continue to be so. Art will free itself from the needs and desires of men. We will no longer paint a forest or a horse as we please, or as they seem to us, but as they really are."

It is the paintings of the period which followed his association with the *Blaue Reiter* that have secured for him the position he holds in the admiration of his fellow countrymen ; pictures of simple, geometric structure, owing much to cubism and informed by masses of colour. Marc had not sufficiently recovered from the impact of the conception of absolute colour to realise that there would yet be a final preoccupation with the purity of the abstract when the element of colour would be re-subordinated to the dominance of a spiritual concept. The signal productions of this period are *The Tiger*, an oil painting of 1912, and *Three Red Horses* of the same year, now on view in Essen. The geometric element of these paintings contrasts with the latent cubism which could be seen in *The Deer Study* of 1904, and a comparison of those two special years shows how far Marc proceeded in the development of cubist notions, independent of the Braque-Picasso school. The *Weidende Pferde* of 1911 still retains much of the naturalism from which Marc first emerged, and differs from the *Deer in the Snow* and *Girl with Green Hair* where the element of abstraction

dominates. Even at this period Marc still doubted the ultimate possibilities of expression which lay within him, and the indecision was protracted by the easy compromise of abstraction and realism. The need for a religious content, which he had experienced at the outset of his artistic career in Munich, became more acute as the paintings of 1908-1912 began to form a perspective for him. They did not spring from a spiritual release and article of faith such as his personality demanded.

This unhappy state was ended in 1913 when Marc visited the Tyrol, for thereafter began to appear those inspired works in which he no longer felt doubt, and which to the eye of the receptive enquirer mark off the genius from the rest.

Die Weltenkuh was the first painting to which Marc ascribed the title of myth. Here was the representation of the ideal of birth and eternal recurrence. The colours of blood-red and white are formed into the central mass of cow and calf, surrounding which is a skein of horizontal lines symbolising nature. This work is companioned by *Geburt der Pferde* (Birth of a Horse), built in much the same proportions with the shape of the full grown horse immanent in the image of the newborn foal.

Central to the genius of Franz Marc is the painting *Tierschicksale*, (The Destiny of Animals). Here he expresses his final notion of the world-form as symbolised by the animal. It is truth in the nature of a revelation, showing how closely Marc can approach an understanding of what impels the world of nature. It is a riot of arrowlike, converging lines from which the senses may only apprehend the notion of strife. In the centre a blue deer is caught up in a vortex of destruction, while around it whirl the brute spirits and dynamic forces of nature. Here for Marc was the very centre of being, to which the soulless working of contemporary society had forbidden access. Life is essentially a flux in time ; it is unthinkable without death. Life is, on all its planes, a simultaneous death and birth. Here, in paint, is the concept of *amor fati*, the denial of all save the cataclysm of life. Hence is seen why Marc would not paint a picture like *Guernica*, though he had seen as much slaughter as ever Picasso imagined.

Ten years later, Gottfried Benn, a revolutionary poet of undoubted genius who had discarded Bolshevism for National Socialism in the early days of the struggle put into words something of what *Tierschicksale* conveyed in symbol. "A century

bursting with destruction is already pounding on our gates : the thunder will fuse with the ocean, the fire with the earth, thus inexorably will the last breeds (*Endgeschlechter*) of the White Race fall upon each other" . . . "To see the New Man in a dream light is a criminal mistake . . . he must know how to fight . . . that he will learn in the midst of arrows, surrounded by the spiritually inimical."

The painting which is nearest to the *Tierschicksale*, and in the opinion of some observers superior to it, is the *Tower of the Blue Horses*. This is a study, predominantly in blue, of four horses, set in an ascending order, in such a way as to conjure the notion of the eternal ; presenting yet another aspect of Marc's consistent striving for a religious expression.

In the remaining works of 1913, the movement towards total abstraction was all but complete. *Little House with Trees* and *Horses in a Landscape* witnessed Marc's last attempt at the expression of the abstract through symbols other than purely abstract ; for thereafter the *Tiersymbole* ceases to be a sufficiently competent vehicle to carry the burden of his conceptions.

The being for which Marc sought was dynamic, the static ordering of the world as defined by the scientist and the materialist was inadequate for such a spiritual apperception. Heraclitus had initiated just such a world notion, a concept which Faustian Europe reinforced through the magic of Meister Eckhart and in the ideologies of Kant and Nietzsche. Only in the climate of these aspirations can we begin to understand Marc.

Thus it came about in the last year of his life that he arrived at that state of knowing for which he had so long looked. The paintings of this last brief period follow each other in rapid and unerring succession, each revealing, in Marc's own words, " the inclination of the modern searcher to experience through the abstract what is generally unified and valid ". Of splendid and ultimate power are the paintings *Playing Forms* and *Fighting Forms*, the former of which was lost in the bombing of 1943. Whereas, hitherto, art had existed in the form of a style expressing a content, as the Gothic spire stood witness to the hierarchy of saints, Marc now succeeded in presenting a closer compact of content and form. This fusion is perhaps the most significant of tendencies in the art of the 20th century, and is parallelled in the achievements of Ezra Pound in literature. How far can this tendency towards the unity of the arts proceed ?

From the German trenches in 1915 came the last work of Franz Marc in the form of his *Feldskizzenbuch* (Field sketchbook). Here in his *Arsenal for a Creation* and *Resurrection* is repeated his message of eternal recurrence. Depicted in the symbolism of war is the struggle between the embryonic will of nature and the power of darkness. At the heart of war, while he calmly awaited the spiritual release which he believed death would bring, he admitted himself to have become fully conscious. What his achievements would have been had he survived the war we can only conjecture. We know at least that he could not have been more disillusioned by mankind than he was when he fell fighting.

Like so many contemporary artists and thinkers, Marc realised how near the abyss Western civilisation stood. "The day is not far distant when Europeans — the few Europeans who still remain — will suddenly become painfully aware of their lack of formal concepts. Then these unfortunate people will bewail their wretched state and become seekers after form."

The years which followed Marc's death, the years of the November spirit, of Weimar and National Socialism, were years of indifference for his reputation. As an Expressionist he was accepted by Weimar and its critique, without, however, the enthusiasm which was afforded to artists like Beckmann and Dix. In the early days of the National Socialist regime the more revolutionary element of the party which concerned itself with artistic matters worked for an incorporation of Expressionism within the body of National Socialist doctrine. When we consider the exclusively Nordic origin and development of Expressionism and, in the case of Marc, the Nietzschean background, an ideological link could scarcely be denied. Emil Nolde, a well-known painter with much less Nietzschean inspiration and metaphysic than Marc, was a party member, and it was in defence of this man and so many others that well known art critics and writers of National Socialist sympathy, like Sauerlandt, Bruno Werner and the modernist poet Gottfried Benn, put forth so much effort. Their spirited and sensitive support was of no avail, for by 1934 reaction demanded the suppression of all but a limited growth of modern painting. Had the arbiters of taste in the Third Reich realised how essential to their dogma was the spirit of Marc and his circle they would have been less inclined to jettison their precious cargo of Expressionism.

EDINBURGH DAYBOOK

by DESMOND STEWART

AUGUST 19 : Sunday, and for the Festival which the Queen opens at St. Giles, Bacchus is denied his dues. Culture's deity is banned from the superb Assembly Rooms with their chandeliers worthy of Versailles, their assaults of flowers, mostly gladioli, set in each splendid niche. One thinks, over tea or Mackie's coffee, of what a Festival may be. The Scotch waitresses murmur placatingly, " But for the ither six days you can drink till one in the morning, Sir."

Nowadays there are festivals everywhere : Salzburg, Venice, Cannes, Edinburgh—there is also Baalbek with classical plays in the Temple of Bacchus. Festivals are sneered at, even by those who take part in them ; festivals, it is alleged, are the social equivalent of highbrow literature. The accusation is correct, the sneer misplaced. For once, people who enjoy good music, and must hear only bad, people who prefer intelligent plays to *The Reluctant Debutante*, seize a city, and exotic names usurp placards usually given over to the popular favourites ; beards and narrow blue jeans are worn by those too intense, or too stout, to be dismissed as Teddy boys. It is true that the people who come to the Festival are indulging in undemocratic activities ; but they harm no one, and they spend in the shops enough money for even the shopkeepers to turn a blind eye to a Festival Club which permits drinking to one a.m.

Festivals have another immense appeal to the intelligent holidaymaker—even if he does live in a city with an active drama (New York, Paris or Moscow, in other words) and even if he does have a huge collection of longplaying records. For places where the weather is unreliable (Baalbek in the sunfortunate Lebanon has no need of this appeal) a series of concerts and plays makes the visitor more or less indifferent to rain or hail, the summer climate of so many European cities.

Of course, the rain and hail punish the improvident, who have

decided on the Festival at the last moment. A Festival, like a religious retreat, needs preparation, You cannot just walk in, and expect to be received by rapturous hoteliers and seat-showering managers. It is best to secure a programme as long in advance as possible, and to work out then which things you want to see. I made my bookings almost six months before I arrived in Edinburgh ; I also secured a most comfortable flat by the simple expedient of writing to the most courteous and helpful Secretary imaginable. As a result, in every performance I was in an excellent position ; in no case was it necessary for me to join the rained-on queue good-naturedly waiting for the last-minute corner from which to squint.

Edinburgh, a city not normally given over to cultural activities, yet seems to have been designed for vaster persons and for vaster purposes than those it now holds possible. Royal Circus where I am staying is an estate for giant families : great grey austere stone fronts (the grey comes from the smoke which is as inseparable from the atmosphere of Edinburgh as sunshine from Naples) look on to large gardens where a dank rain obscures detail and makes everything lugubrious and solemn. From the backs, these houses are tall uncharming cliffs behind whose windows no faces ever appear.

Lit up from the first night is Calton Hill : as typical a Scotch memorial as one could wish for. The end of a Parthenon, beautifully made in grey stone, it looks strangely two-dimensional, almost yellow cardboard, in the blazing floodlights which are set at every possible angle. It reflects the Scottish soul in its flirtation with beauty. A sudden mood, " Let us build a classical temple. To which God ? Oh, we have no need of pagan deities in Knox's city. Just a temple, to stand on one of our seven hills, as Homer stands on our bookshelves. With perfect proportions." And then the sudden freezing afterthought : " but this costs money that could be spent so much more gainfully." It was spent more gainfully : Scotland invented the Industrial Revolution, which turned her midlands into a cheapjack's heaven, made her men into palefaced hollowchested dwarfs, or sent them packing overseas to build an art-less empire. No Scottish leader robbed the treasury to complete, like Pericles, an affirmation in stone of the power of beauty. No Scotsman could be that dishonest, or that inspired. But it is there, as a folly, to show that some Scots would like that kind of inspiration : that there is one tenth of their souls not interested in money and money's monuments, just as there is one tenth of a Greek temple. And this fragment hints at beauty, amber-yellow in the cold rain, over a grey city

on different levels where the smog swirls and the windows are lozenges of light in cold tenements ten storeys high.

August 20.—The Edinburgh audiences mutter, " I don't understand this." But they applaud vociferously ; the seats are sold, Schönberg's *Pierrot Lunaire*, " the first major atonal piece ever to gain a foothold in the esteem of a wider public ", is sung by Hedli Anderson in a plain white dress. *Façade* is recited by Dame Edith Sitwell mantically garbed from behind a façade with megaphone painted on it, but no megaphone. Unwisely, Dame Edith allows her now rather frail voice to come out to the listeners on the same microphonic channel as brings the robust orchestra : voice was all but lost, despite the frenzied " louder, please " gesturings of a middle-aged young man in Dame Edith's entourage : the sound became louder, but of the orchestra. Hedli Anderson's singing is spectacular : clear, expressive, as crisp and as unrhetorical as the music. 21 poems—it might sound a long ordeal, with *Façade* to follow, all this between 11 a.m. and lunch. But *Galgenlied* for one was rushed through with the speed of a bow descending on a violin. *Heimweh* with an almost conversational reverie. The poems which compose this cycle are translations into German of poems in French by Albert Giraud. The German is excitingly good : Alan Neame said to me, " Perhaps we should publish all our future works as ' translated from the German '." In a sense all that one writes is often as if translated from a foreign tongue. From German ? In many moods. One poem is particularly beautiful in any language ; and in Schönberg's version the music does not drown the thought : one trembles at the thought of how Roger Quilter would have deranged it.

The English translation gives the meaning ; the German the romantic feeling that is more than meaning.

JOURNEY HOME

The moon-beam is the rudder,
A water-lily serves as a boat,
On it Pierrot travels south
Before a favourable wind.

The water hums low scales
And rocks the light boat.
The moon-beam is the rudder
A water-lily serves as a boat.

Home to Bergamo
Pierrot is returning.
The green horizon already
Dawns dimly in the east—
The moon-beam is the rudder.

HEIMFAHRT

Der Mondstrahl ist das Ruder,
Seerose dient als Boot :
Drauf fährt Pierrot gen Süden
Mit gutem Reisewind.

Der Strom summt tiefe Skalen
Und wiegt den leichten Kahn.
Der Mondstrahl ist das Ruder,
Seerose dient als Boot.

Nach Bergamo, zur Heimat,
Kehrt nun Pierrot zurück ;
Schwach dämmernd schon im Osten
Der grüne Horizont.
—Der Mondstrahl ist das Ruder.

After these strange haunting poems, where Pierrot becomes a dominant haunting symbol, all the more intangible because he is coherent and constant in the poetry, it is hard to consider *Façade* seriously. Constant Lambert's music is lively and amusing. The programme says of Dame Edith's poems : " Their ever-new charm moves us, we don't know how : it makes us smile, we don't know why." I should hazard the reason : the fashionable nostalgia for the 'twenties, nothing more, nor less. There are phrases which begin to be poetry.

The stars in their apiaries,
Sylphs in their aviaries,

but nowhere is that sustained sincerity of soul which marks out poetry, whether sophisticated or naïf, as different from skilled playing with words. *Jodelling Song* seemed better than when I read it, or

heard it, before. Even there, perhaps, in the brittle period and mood in which these poems were written, were hints of the suffering which were to make of the later Dame Edith a greater poet :

While the day seems grey,
And his heart of ice,
Grey as chamois, or
The edelweiss,

And the mountain-streams
Like cowbells sound—
Tirra lirra, drowned
In the waiter's dreams.

Who has gone beyond
The forest waves,
While his true and fond
Ones seek their graves.

Here a diner-out has seen the waiter, with his too tight shoes, and recognised his dreams. This was not usual in a decade when people either postulated economic needs for waiters, or regarded them as servants only.

As for Dame Edith herself, much of course is *Façade*. As she withdrew behind the screen, a long thin hand stayed behind, posed on the canvas, with a green ring as big as a small playing card upon it. The nunlike veil emphasises the gothick frailty of her unique face. She knows this ; she has always known it. But her delight in the enthusiastic applause of the audience is unfeigned. She deserves the applause ; these poems deserve their title. They are not great poetry. Why do we like them ?

I slept through the rain of the afternoon. For in the evening there was the Hamburg State Opera and the *Magic Flute*.

It is impressive to one who has seen the self-importance of royalty in some other countries (where it is usually unpopular) to notice how modestly the Queen of England arrives at a theatre. Not finding it necessary to be late (to claim that time can stand still for kings) she arrives and sits down with ramrod back, surrounded by the discreetly staring people who had known that there would be Anglo-Saxon embellishments for a Germanic evening, and whose breasts glitter with the rows of medals for which they used to ridicule

Marshal Goering. Someone had said, " Does the Queen stand up for the National Anthem ? " She does. She also stood up, as did everyone else, for the longer and more beautiful *Deutschland, Deutschland über alles*, whose neuter last word is so often translated as though it were a masculine plural.

Some critics have complained that the smallness of the King's Theatre stage cribbed the production. I did not notice this. What I did remark was the cunning use of a fundamentally bare stage which could then, at certain moments, by tricks of lighting and lavish detail, become astonishingly exotic : the sudden blackout, thunder clap, and the queen of Night on an apex of shadowy courtiers—the fantastic costumes of the negroes, Monostatos in concertina—swelling pantaloons and huge 18th century jacket—the superb luxury of a tent under which Pamina sleeps, approached by the black men. Not uninteresting : this production did not in any way bring out the often referred to Masonic elements in Mozart's design, so that for the first time I saw them as perhaps a cliché of criticism, and fundamentally unnecessary to this mixture of fairy tale, allegory and pantomime. The music, so pure and so profound, is of itself the lesson : there is no need for restricted formulas or interpretations based on late 18th century politics. The priests—one of the most effective choruses conceived by the mind of man—are so often played either as Pusey House hierophants or as aproned Lodge-members. These were neither : when they sang to Isis and Osiris, they sang as though they believed in them as, surely, did Mozart, when he composed this masterpiece.

August 21.—Art has only rarely been conceived by its practisers, or its critics, as something divorced from life. The 19th century cult of art for art's sake found its most devoted advocate in Swinburne, perhaps because of all poets his psychology put him most securely outside the human fold. His *William Blake* is a masterly statement of such a view of art—all the more remarkable in coming from a poet so deeply steeped in classical literature. The Greek view of art was essentially linked to man ; and the greatest Greek critic saw in tragedy a medicine for the soul. I was interested to see how the Cocteau-Stravinsky treatment of the theme of Oedipus would appear : a beautiful, strange, remote thing in itself, at which we would gape, remote, like stargazers ; or would the power of the myth, which involves so much of one's deepest attitudes to life, seep through the strident music, the church latin, the cool, detached cynicism of the narrator ? I was well placed to put the work to such

a test. My own mood—and sometimes it is fitting for a critic to be personal, to show, as it were, his own position in mood and place, in his job of criticising—was one compounded of self-pity, chagrin, rage, and indecision. (It is irrelevant to give the cause of this passing mood. Let it be the *datum* for what follows.) I imagined that it would be difficult for me to concentrate, and not to allow my impatient thoughts to rove outside the theatre, and indeed outside Edinburgh.

The curtain rose on a completely dark stage : the first contrast with the bright sunlit world of Greek drama, even tragic drama. The chorus became visible, I counted 52, in ranks, their heads as stylised as masks projecting through thick folds of what looked like whorled canvas and was later described in the press as plasticine. Above the chorus, at the back, stood three oblong boxes, in front of which the main characters, Oedipus, Creon and Jocasta, were to stand. The music I already knew well from the recording in which Cocteau himself speaks the narrative part. But I had never imagined the effect of the work till I saw it staged. Obedient to the wishes of the composer and the poet, the main characters were monumental as the language. They hardly moved at all, so that when they did, an inch's jerky movement of a clawlike finger was more expressive than the usual actor's leap across the stage. The masks and stiff gestures made them resemble insects whose movements are abrupt and sinister. I remembered vividly, as I looked at Oedipus, a fly I once saw under a microscope : the same scaly, partly blue, partly gold, helmet. These creatures above the level of the ranked chorus, front and side, were made as remote from us, the onlookers, as it would be possible ; they were Martians, more than Elgin Marble Greeks. And yet the combination of myth, poetry and music brought them nearer to my heart, at least, than could ever be the middle-aged men and women sitting near me. The opera moved at a terrific pace, without that bane of the theatre, an interval, to disrupt one's mood. An unpractical length indeed, in a theatre where effect is measured by the metronome : and there was to be a filler, Mavra, a joking, merry piece, to follow. Yet in the hour or so that the music lasted, my feelings were purged totally. My internal crisis passed. A decision, deeper than intellectual and longer maturing in an hour than some decisions in a year, had been forming somewhere down inside myself while I had been totally absorbed in the tragedy of the insect king and his sharp, inhuman pathetic stilted queen : while the golden bald Creon stood as godlike spectator to his nephew's passion.

The return of the mask was achieved only by the three main characters. And one of the two criticisms I should make of what is inevitably a difficult work to produce concerns this partial return to naturalism. Teiresias, the most mysterious character in mythology, appeared very slowly from under the platform on which Oedipus stood : his coming was sinister, he wore a long white gown, one waited breathless to see what monstrous visage he wore, this half-man, half-woman, nearly two hundred years old, who knows the secrets of the birds and the ways of the cruel gods. But when he appeared, he looked like my grandmother risen from her bed, in flowing white locks and nightgown. This was a disappointment. The other disappointment was the narrator. In the Cocteau record of the opera Cocteau's French is a miracle of concise, loaded statement : as sinister as the insect masks, as smooth as velvet. The Hamburg State Opera's narrator did not seem sure of English, and the English he had to deliver lacked completely the irony of the French. He sounded like a radio compère not entirely sure of the programme about which he was talking. Once he confused Oedipus with Creon, and the fact that he wore ordinary evening dress did not make me, at least, more ready to forgive him.

These two faults, however, were small compared with the impact of the whole. We did not stay for Mavra, and later on that same evening, the music critic of another review said we had missed little.

August 22.—Parochial nationalism is a boring manifestation at the best of times, at the worst dangerous as well. It is to the credit of the Scottish organisers of the Festival that the Scottish element is played down, except for the city itself, that is described rather embarrassingly on the rubbish-boxes as the "City Beautiful". There is a programme called Pleasure of Scotland, which I did not attend ; and there is the Tattoo on the Castle esplanade, which is said to draw more Canadians and Americans than the rest of the Festival put together. I did not attend this either. The only Scottish work of drama to be performed was Bridie's *Anatomist*. The play was given in the Gateway, a teetotal theatre belonging to the Church of Scotland. Let it be admitted at once that this play showed very fitly the state of the drama in Scotland : not up to international drama standards. The wig of Dr. Knox bulged, the two sisters Dishart seemed to come from different social classes, and most of the characters, if not all, lacked the certainty of great acting. Nevertheless, the play, which is rather a good one, held one's

attention ; and the performance as a whole was enjoyable. Bridie is perhaps the last writer of this sort of post-Ibsen play. Prosaic, a conversation-piece with melodramatic moments, it yet has moments too when the prose bursts into fiery life : when Dr. Knox is allowed to personify more than a surgeon willing to buy dead bodies without examining too closely how they got dead, and becomes a symbol of that bull-headedness which many Scots, to their salvation, still retain. When he explodes that no man knows he is great until he hears the insults of the mob, he is speaking of more than anatomists. Bridie had in him more than he could express in this jaded dramatic formula which he inherited and out of which he never grew. My father told me that Bridie's picture of Knox as a memorable anatomist is exaggerated : despite the buying of so many bodies (including the blowsy harlot in what was, perhaps, the most exciting act) he did not contribute anything remarkable to the science of anatomy. Bridie uses him therefore as a symbol of the man who is prepared to defy the mob. Yet there are times in the play when one is not sure where one's sympathies should be : with the rugged, soft-centred, one-eyed Anatomist ; or with the rather feeble female lead who attacks coldhearted scientists for whom human beings are merely bodies. I felt that Bridie might have found a better symbol for his cause than the body-snatcher's customer. Perhaps among politicians ? But then, that might have raised issues which would have kept Bridie out of the Festival. And things being what they are in Scottish drama, we are lucky to have him (complete with bronze head in the entrance hall).

The Gateway Theatre announce a Scots programme for the winter. It seems misguided, What Edinburgh needs is a Scots theatre of drama, rather than a theatre of Scots drama. Or so one Scotsman thinks.

August 23.—*Coppelia* excellently danced by Sadler's Wells; John Blair outstanding. The sets by Osbert Lancaster were good, rather than remarkable ; in the second act, however, where the dolls lend themselves to the pictorial sense that is so important to the ballet, there was inspiration : the Crusader with a beautiful plume and the turbaned Saracen harmlessly chop at each other, the Chinaman jerks, the Highlander brings to life the souvenirs in the Princes Street shops. Nevertheless, for all its beauty, ballet seems to me less important and less moving than opera or drama. (It is an easier art, perhaps, to enjoy, and to write about, in the waffling manner.) Here could begin, doubtless, a controversy. But here this critic ends. Ballet is to be

enjoyed ; and to be written about, if at all, by the balletomane. For the mere enjoyer it is as idle as the attempt to describe flowers. The last act which, on some nights, is danced by itself, seemed less good than the first two. And one of the non-dancing characters played to the gallery " quaffing ale " while the nuptial dancers should have been holding the eye. Such individualism would be unwelcome in a German or Italian company.

One person unaccustomed to ballet remarked : " What exaggerated buttocks the men all have ! "

August 24.—A purely musical day. Nina Milkina plays Mozart. Heavy rain outside, inside the early brittle music of the young Mozart is played on the fortepiano. It *seems* early ; it does not, to me, predict the complexities and depths of the maturer musician. And is it wise to let audiences hear the two kinds of instrument in one performance ? The fortepiano equips one for the precise sounds of the precisest century; after it the huge Steinway sounds as through stuffed with marshmallows ; and some of the vague dust which we of the 20th century feel as characteristic of the 19th is allowed to settle on Mozart. Only by the end of the recital, in the wonderful Sonata which Mozart wrote shortly before his death and pauper's burial, one had become accustomed to the change in tone, and able to appreciate the sensitivity and strength of Miss Milkina's wrists.

The Renaissance Singers sing without musical accompaniment at all. The *Missa Papae Marcelli* transports one to a polyphonous world so different from the dreary unison of the present, and so religious, that the being seated in the Masonic Hall irked me, under the glare of so many marble Masons along the walls : even though two priests in Roman collars sat nearby ; even though one of the fatter singers was a priest himself.

How puzzling programmes are to those unacquainted with the specialised language of music. " A lesser talent might have rendered the trochaic metre by an unbroken ternary rhythm. Palestrina's mastery is revealed by his controlled avoidance of this fetter allied to a succession of major chords in root position, relieved only at the cadence by a solitary minor third." This rivals (and in a way resembles) handbooks of astrology.

August 27.—My last day in Edinburgh : one expects little from last days (except in love, where one's heart is snared, often, as the train moves out.) I was unready for the excitement still to come. A half empty Lyceum (from which the Princess Royal was to leave early, to stand, furdraped, raindrenched at the Tattoo), a programme

with a precis of an incomprehensibly entangled plot, deferred the shock till the last possible moment.

There had been much talk in Edinburgh of the inadequacy of the stages ; could the city that had failed to complete its parthenon find the million pounds needed for a Festival Theatre ? The *Piccolo Teatro* production of *Arlecchino* (Giorgio Strehler, director, Ezio Frigerio for scenery and costumes) showed the idiocy of mind that equates good drama with lavish stages ; or puts down the cultural paralysis in English cities to a lack of space. As though to mock this attitude—and to show how brilliance does not need a vast arena—they had erected on the Lyceum stage, without disguise, a small platform stage of their own. At the back, a drop-cloth with faded painted scenes ; this was adjusted, quite openly, from time to time by minor members of the cast. The whole cast appeared, before the action began, to dance a kind of opening jig. There was no *surprise*, therefore, when an actor appeared. The play was not only acted in Italian (and Goldoni wrote it in 1743), but in an Italian of fantastic speed. Even Italians would have had to strain to keep up with the words at certain times. This was all intentional, and mattered not at all. So perfect was the discipline of the team, so utterly was each subordinated to the design of the whole, so precise and important was each apparently random act, that even those without Italian enjoyed the wit of mime, the meaningful elegance of the acting. The characters were stock : Pantalone (Antonio Battiseelia) with a monstrous long-nosed black mask and the most agile hands I have ever seen, Doctor Lombardi, the quack, Brighella, the rogue innkeeper, and the electric, animal-masked and leopard-lithe Arlecchino, with the swift pathos of a puzzled but unself-pitying fool. The plot is of its day—confusions over marriage, misunderstandings over people supposedly killed in a duel, even a heroine " Beatrice, disguised in man's clothes as Federigo Rasponi." The " funny film " has made me yawn as often as the serious film has made me laugh. Goldoni plays many of the tricks which that least boring comedian Bob Hope also employs. In this way there is something 18th century about Mr. Hope : the cowardly hero, for example, as shown by Silvio in this play, that recalls the scene in the Magic Flute where Monostatos and Papageno run away from each other. (Mozart, interestingly enough, contemplated making an opera of *Arlecchino* in 1783.) But Arlecchino, the clown-servant of two masters—afraid always that his double-service will be discovered, forced in the great scene of the play to serve dinner to both

of them at breakneck speed on different sides of the stage—struck me as having the sureness of movement of Chaplin (the admirer of Japanese plays), without that self-pity which the comedian from Whitechapel infuses into his little man, and which is appropriate effluvia of industrial man. With Chaplin, we must be on his side, against the rich, the beautiful, and the strong. There is none of this with Goldoni. Arlecchino is the little man : the slapped, ordered about buffoon whose little schemes to outwit and to profit go astray. But he is a child of Venice and the robust 18th century. He does not pity himself ; we pity and love him. How many of us could really claim to *love* Mr. Chaplin ?

Arlecchino is brittle as glass, fragilely coloured as china, as sure-footed and light as the dance of cats. One does not seek the heart. When it comes, it does not come as in a Chaplin film (I think of *The Great Dictator*, or *M. Verdoux*) as a crushing emotional blackmail, loaded into the plot, and forced on one with the insistence of someone selling a carpet. It comes like the melancholy in a happy song. It comes when at the end of a riotous first act, the heroine Clarice (not a very profound or intellectual young lady) sits down and suddenly says, about a love which is obviously as light as the courage of Silvio,

" In life, one either suffers, or hopes ; only rarely does one know joy."

A Festival is justified which can, in so few days, give us so much to enjoy, so much to assess, and so much to remember afterwards. Without it, what would we have done, in all this rain ?

A DIARY

THE knock-about fancy dress party antics of the Democratic and Republican conventions failed to amuse American television audiences. Rather than listen to political speeches, even so delightfully disguised, they switched programmes, however drear the alternative. *The Times* suggests that before the next English elections it would be a good idea if the political parties did some research into the attractiveness of their broadcasts and television appearances, and the size of the audiences they command. " The question the party officials have to ask themselves " it says in a leading article " is whether television is going to fail to be the phenomenal medium for political propaganda which they thought it would be, or whether the answer is that they have not so far found the right technique."

Some months ago it was estimated that only 14 per cent of viewers looked at the Prime Minister, the other 86 per cent preferring the I.T.A. programme, and I saw it suggested that on these important occasions it might be as well not to allow a choice of programmes. I am afraid this idea, which seems so clever at first sight, would make little difference. Even if Sir Anthony Eden wore the feathered headdress of a Red Indian chief (as American politicians feel obliged to do) it would probably attract a mere 3 or 4 per cent more, and very likely instead of listening to his words they would glance at the screen from time to time while he quietly mouthed, ready to turn up the sound only when the next item began.

It is not easy to listen to a wireless speech, or " talk " I suppose it should be called, which begins, as the Prime Minister's did a few weeks ago : " The Suez Canal is a name familiar to everyone ". The trite and obvious, the faintly patronising undertone—now *this* is something we are all going to be able to understand—is it surprising that most people turn off their wirelesses ? Personally I always prefer to read the " talk " next day, wasting two minutes instead of twenty.

The only surprising thing is that Conservative and Labour politicians should not have guessed long ago that nobody wants to listen to them. When they hire a hall to speak in it always remains half empty. This has nothing to do with politics, simply they themselves are too dull.

A good speaker can attract huge audiences ; crowds of people will go out on bitter, foggy evenings and sit on wooden seats to hear Sir Oswald Mosley, for example. But oratory is the rarest of gifts, and not one bestowed on the Edens, Macmillans and Morrisons. It is not their fault, nor does it necessarily make them less good administrators ; on the other hand they have the sorrow of knowing that they bore.

★ ★ ★

There is, of course, a remedy. People love to listen to a debate. If, when Sir Anthony Eden began : " The Suez Canal is a name familiar to everyone " there had been an opponent to say " Yes it is, and the name Cyprus is familiar too, but not to confuse the issue kindly come to the point and tell us what you plan to *do* " the next sentences of the broadcast could have been skipped—it went on, you remember, " I have come to talk to you to-night about what has happened there in the last few days and what it means to us. You, or some members of your family perhaps, have served there, or maybe one of you, or more, have helped to defend the Canal in one or other of the two Great Wars". Debate would oblige him to omit most of the rubbish and concentrate on essentials ; it is democratic, traditional in England, and above all amusing to the audience. Capricious " viewers " might consent, at last, to watch.

The result would be eminently fair. The brilliant, quick debater who scores every point would by no means be certain to convert everybody to his way of thinking. If the slow, stupid man had a good case the public would side with him, just as a jury sides with the dull but honest witness who is bullied by a clever Q.C. Strange though it may seem, the best man would probably win.

★ ★ ★

When the north of Europe breaks all records with its wet, cold summer, a holiday in a Mediterranean island is even more agreeable than usual. Sir Anthony Eden could not spare time from his crises to go, as according to the newspapers he had planned, to Malta.

The English hangman (I hoped we had heard the last of him) on the other hand, has been staying in Cyprus. The journey which did not take place, and the ghastly journey which did, are equally the result of the Eden policies.

★ ★ ★

Apparently the Schwarzenberg Platz in Vienna, re-named Stalin Platz, is officially Schwarzenberg once more. Nobody ever called it anything else. In Paris, where the street names are often changed, people cling to the old ones, causing a good deal of confusion. To many Parisians, Franklyn Roosevelt is still Victor Emmanuel, and Leclerc is Orleans, which puzzles newcomers who go by the names they see written up.

In our village a very short, blind alley is called the *rue de l'Espérance*, which seems cynical, and in a Paris suburb the other day I noticed *Impasse Camille Desmoulins*. If to have an avenue named after one might flatter the vanity, it would be hard to imagine anything more calculated to tease than that it should be a suburban *impasse*. I make a gift of this thought to town planners.

★ ★ ★

During the holidays when the whole world is on the move half its inhabitants seem to horde into France and Italy. Roads are black with crawling motors, trains are packed with humans to the last inch of the corridors, so tightly that they cannot even sit on their luggage. Not everyone looks contented. I notice that almost all, on station platforms, or in the corridors, or waiting in queues, seem to be eating something. Their jaws move, ceaselessly chewing away. Probably they find it soothes the nervousness induced by travel in the horrid circumstances of to-day. Nobody feels the need to eat between meals if they are on horseback, or in a gondola, or (I suppose) a sedan chair.

★ ★ ★

The slow, rounded accents of our trans-atlantic visitors are to be heard all over Europe in late summer. Usually their owners seem to be enjoying themselves. I overheard one ask another as they gazed at the Grand Canal in Venice : " Have you been in Idalee lorng ? Have you seen Rome ? No ? Oh, you should see Rome. It's not like Venuss. Venuss is Venuss, but—— well——Rome's *Rome*." Of course he was perfectly right ; probably one could not say, at

least not so feelingly, Wisconsin is Wisconsin, but Little Rock is Little Rock.

At a performance of *Walküre* an American family sitting near us became very restless and it took fierce hushing from neighbours to stop them whispering to one another. During the singing of *Wotans Abschied* the son started to groan and fidget, and we heard his mother say to him : " Sh dear, it will be over shortly ". They all cheered up when the fire music began and the opera house was filled with exciting smoke ; they guessed, rightly, that the moment of release was near.

★ ★ ★

In the cloisters of S. Giorgio Maggiore the Virtuosi di Roma played Vivaldi's *Four Seasons* on a warm, still, scented evening. As we waited near the church for a boat to take us back to Venice we looked across the Bacino S. Marco where a black three-masted schooner, the *Creole*, lay at anchor and innumerable gondolas and motorboats were moving through the dark water, to the brightly lit city. The only blot was the Danieli Hotel roof garden, blobs of poisonous green light like cheap boiled sweets. Everything else was perfect.

★ ★ ★

It is strange to think of the Venetian glass blowers walking to work each morning through their incomparably beautiful town, leaving the sounds of the sea and the bells behind, and spending the day in dark cave-like rooms with fiery furnaces, making objects so frightfully ugly that each year one imagines one has seen the very worst they can be capable of inventing. This year they have outdone themselves ; the shops have large selections of glass clowns with baggy trousers, orange hair and red noses, some are as big as a small child. Do people buy them, I wonder ? No doubt they are fun to make, a change from wine glasses. I have often watched a glassblower make a pretty, shining bowl and then ruin it by sticking hot glass flowers on it before it has hardened. Great skill, a dreadful inventiveness, and (presumably) a demand for horrors, combine to produce the Venetian glass clowns, and the ducks, and the nasty prince-charming candlesticks, and the barbola work glass baskets. Perhaps it is lucky for the tourists ; if the objects were desirable, as they easily might be, it would be one temptation the more. D.M.

THEATRE

Tchehov's *The Seagull*

(SAVILLE THEATRE)

by MICHAEL HARALD

YOUR well-paid Sunday and weekly-review critics should have warned you, but they did not, so I write, a little late in the day, in the hope of saving a few readers time, money and temper. Do not waste these assets on this production. If the warning comes too late and your irritation with the performers tends unfairly to involve the author as accessory, I must then urge you to read or re-read the play, preferably in Koteliansky's Penguin version. The magic is still there. You will find that it works for the hundredth as for the first time. A wheelchair, a fishing-rod, the trailing of a dress, the fading ends of commonplace sentences, unite to produce that extraordinary poetic and dramatic unity which only a fool could fail to apprehend and only a West-end management and West-end actors could utterly destroy.

Read the play — yes. But remember that the script of *The Seagull*, like the rest of Tchehov's plays, and unlike — say — Shaw's, was intended to serve merely as a score for producer and players. It was written to be played. It was written, in fact, for the Moscow Arts Theatre, for a group of actors chosen, trained and directed by Stanislavsky. It is a difficult play to interpret — indeed, under the existing laws of the West-end jungle, nearly an impossible one. It requires a company of players of the highest intelligence, sensitivity and professional competence, all soloists, yet able and willing to work out of the limelight as members of an orchestra. It requires a director of genius and independent income, a diplomat or a tyrant who can coax or command his actors out of the one role they have been impersonating throughout their entire stage careers — *themselves*, plus or minus false hair, dyed hair, RADA yap or Mummerset

buzz — into the drifting, unemphatic characters who stumble into the Tchehov magic. Gielgud's production of *The Cherry Orchard* at Hammersmith two years ago nearly brought off the essential miracle, for Gielgud, besides possessing in whole or part the qualifications I have adumbrated, has earned — or, at all events, achieved —the power to intimidate his management and choose his own cast.

I must now, reluctantly, stifle the temptation to dwell on the glories of this play — they are sufficiently well known, or, if they are not, they may be sampled for the trifling outlay of a shilling or two with Penguin Books — and comment on the performance. The producer, these days, is normally held responsible, but I find it hard to indict Mr. Michael Macowan, who has done good work in the past and has proved his right to direct Tchehov's plays. I shall assume, in the absence of any real evidence, that he had no say in the casting of the piece, and that his efforts to train his actors were cunningly foiled by their agents, their film-contracts and by the management.

(It is possible, even, I suppose, that Mr. Macowan shot himself either before or after the first night. I have no information on the subject. It is a harrowing thought, and, just to be on the safe side, I will apologize for what might seem to the finicky a lapse of taste.) Mr. Hugh Williams who, perhaps, has neither agent nor film-contract, and appears to care for Tchehov, made an extremely good shot at Trigorin — by far and away the best performance of the production — assisted by an aspect of cultured melancholy which was perfectly in character and, more, conveyed both a dissociation with what went on around him and a half-formed intention to drown himself the moment the curtain came down. This was good, an extra-Tchehovian performance, and Mr. Williams still lives, for I saw him plain this morning at Cambridge Circus. Miss Wynyard, an improved actress, drew a rough sketch of Mme. Arkadin, which I filled in, and coloured, and pointed in the intervals into a perfect performance by Edwige Feuillère. As for the rest — *que dire ?* — yet something must be said. I am forbidden, I believe, by the laws of libel to state categorically that actors cannot act ; therefore I must content myself with the observation that if they *can*, then two, whom I shall not name, demonstrate the fact in a very different manner from such contemporaries as Mr. Guinness, Mr. Wolfit, the Williams trio, Emlyn, Hugh and Kenneth, Miss Irene Worth, Miss Leighton, *et al.* Perhaps, indeed, their style of acting, blurred, uncouth and untimed, has its validity by school and standards unknown to me, but evidently known to the Saville management.

Mr. Relph in the part of Sorin gave a highly characteristic portrayal of Mr. Relph. I enjoyed this performance the first time I saw it, ten years ago at the New Theatre, when the programme announced it as Gloucester in *King Lear*. Time and custom, however, have dimmed its enchantment ; the shuffle and the semi-tone voice have delighted me long enough. The whiskers must come off, the chuckle shall be silenced.

And so shall the critic's moan — at any rate on the subject of this production. Dog will now proceed to eat dog.

They should have warned you, but they did not. Their work, for the most part, is as inexpert as it is casual. Mr. Kenneth Tynan, to my mind clearly the best of contemporary critics, was honest enough a year or two ago to stress the fact that his *Observer* appointment was due to what he termed the " defection " of those who might have done his job better. The critics as a body seem to me no more illuminating in their judgments than the annoyingly self-opinionated person next to you in the interval queue at the coffee-counter. They are less uninhibited, certainly ; but this too I would fault. Their timidity is possibly a reaction from the alarmingly uninhibited approach of the late James Agate, who attempted, often successfully, to conceal his limitations of knowledge and style by bluff and breeze, alternating with the celebrated irascibility which he no doubt thought to be Johnsonian. The good critic need not necessarily be a stylist or a wit (though I own to a personal preference for one who is either or both) ; but he must have a profound and easily communicable knowledge of his subject. His *standards* should be implied in every line he writes, and these, of course, should be the highest standards. If he is content to sparkle amusingly, or to fizzle feebly, among the second-rate, feeling more at home in that company, and sensing accurately enough that most of his readers share his partiality, then he is a bad critic and an enemy of the theatre. If he knows the best and, lazily, chooses or praises the next best, then he is probably a venal critic as well as a bad one, encroaching on the press-agent's preserves. If he *aspires* to the best, and honestly wishes to love Aeschylus as well as he loves Anouilh — finding this difficult — he may be a good theatre-goer, but he remains a bad critic. He lacks technical connoisseurship ; he cannot " see the object in itself as it really is ", he is the rule, not the exception, in the English theatre.

All caps that fit may be worn.

CINEMA

Notes on a Festival

by VINCENT MURRAY

TARTANS and sporrans replace the bikini at Scotland's film festival, but, though it makes a change from its European counterpart, this national sentiment can be overdone. How many films has Scotland sent in to her festival — how much music, painting, ballet, come to that ? One daren't ask the question north of the border, yet the drapery suggests a national event of the first order. In one cinema I went into I noticed all the usherettes were wearing tartan skirts. My remarks on this brought the reply (in a distinctly Southern accent) : " They're issued to all usherettes during the festival !" Nevertheless, it's the films that matter, and their abundance leaves no time for thinking of anything else.

A week is too short to do justice to a full-scale film-festival, especially one so concentrated as Edinburgh's, but even the briefest of visits to such a rich variety of films is bound to yield much of value. The features I have seen have not reached a particularly high standard. Gene Kelly's **Invitation to the Dance** is the only one worth remembering for its originality both of theme and treatment. Minelli's **Lust for Life,** a story of Van Gogh, I would place low down the list despite its occasional striking scenes, for the commercial influence is evident throughout. **Les Mauvaises Rencontres** is distinguished by the name and style of Alexandre Astruc (whose *Rideau Cramoisi* caused such a stir in France a year or so ago) but by little else. Its sex-theme offers nothing new. The features still to be shown when I left hardly seem inspiring, but, one never knows . . . There are always, of course, the British revivals (*Pygmalion*, *The Red Shoes*, *Odd Man Out*), but the old, no matter how good, is not the primary attraction at a festival of " Living Cinema ", as the new term has it.

The essence of the Edinburgh Film Festival is to be found in its documentaries, in the modern variations on the Grierson theme : " the creative treatment of actuality ". This year two outstanding examples, one American, one British, prove that documentary is as alive as it has ever been (in spite of what you see supporting the feature at the local cinema). **On the Bowery** and **Together** differ from the majority of documentaries not only in their strikingly original styles, but in their concern with people, their work (if any) and leisure. *Together*, a moving study of deaf-mutes in London, has previously been reviewed in these pages. *On the Bowery* looks like being the crowning achievement of the festival. Mark Sufrin's

picture of life in the Bowery is, he tells us, authentic, caught with concealed cameras by men living with the characters described. We may be appalled at what we see in this frank study, but the vividness of its detail and the sincerity of its approach cannot be ignored. Of the other short films so far seen most maintained a good standard. **The Door in the Wall,** an experiment in what is termed the " dynamic frame ", happens to have a good story (from H. G. Wells) to tell as well, which helps when a new technique is being explored. The idea is to adapt the size of the screen to fit the mood of each scene, with the result that the image resembles at various times a horizontal or vertical slit, a postage-stamp, pin-head or large post-card. Many sequences, it must be admitted, gain tremendously from it (the boy's first entrance into the colourful garden ; the search through the narrow alley-ways), but I cannot help feeling that the old-fashioned close-up, with appropriate masking, would have served just as well no matter what size the screen (as Charles Laughton recently demonstrated in his melodrama *Night of the Hunter*). The play of light on cockle-shells provides Alfred Erckhardt with splendidly photogenic material for his **Tanz der Muscheln,** but, as with most consciously " arty " documentaries, it soon exhausts its possibilities. **Jiri Trinka's Puppets** reveals the artist behind the wonderful Czech cartoons we have admired for many years. Interesting as it always is to go behind the scenes, I should have preferred one of his cartoons, a pleasure so far denied me this year. Compensation of a sort is U.P.A.'s **The Invisible Moustache of Raoul Dufy,** loudly applauded by a local audience for its Scots nationalist overtones. Not as good as the best from this company, the cartoon has elegance of line and colour that raises it well above average. Alain Jesoa's **Leon La Lune** humorously describes the multifarious jobs of " an ordinary man ", and is a pleasant and far more worth-while effort than Jacques Baratier's over-contrived **Paris La Nuit** which attempts to show aspects of Parisian life. An unusual cartoon by Joan and Peter Foldes called **A Short Vision** is as disturbing as it is slight. A nameless " thing " devastates the world, only to be swallowed up in a flame of its own causing. I am not overfond of cartoons depending for their effect on changes of light and line on static objects, but the vague terror of the unknown depicted so well in this one held me fascinated. As an experiment it is certainly worth-while.

I have not yet managed to see Heinrich Harrer's *7 Years in Tibet*, which I am told contains some unique sequences of life in Lhasa. Nor has *The Lost Cannibals*, a film on jungle exploration in New Guinea, come my way, but these and films like them are the stuff on which the festival relies. The experimental, the new approach to film-making must always have a place in it, but the documentary of travel, of the widening vision, is the festival's staple food. In ten years its aims have changed little and, though every film selected cannot be a masterpiece, it is fairly certain there is something in each to recommend it. It is worth the strain on mind and eye to discover what it is.

TELEVISION

Report

by JAMES CUNNINGHAM

CONSTANT revaluing of standards is essential in T.V. reviewing, for the drug operates quietly and insidiously on critic and general viewer alike. Nevertheless the occasional item of quality does occur — or does it only appear to be good because of its abysmal surroundings ? With a vigorous shake of the head, then, let us consider the best of I.T.V. and B.B.C. during the last few months. Their version of *The Adding Machine*, an expressionist play by Elmer Rice, was surprisingly well handled without any concessions to popular taste. The early scenes especially gained dramatically from a carefully controlled grouping and lighting that contrasted well with the later, more naturalistic scenes. As an adaptation, though, the programme was bound to be less satisfactory than a B.B.C. play written specially for the medium. Patrick Alexander's *The Condemned* was beautifully produced by Alvin Rakin with a fine fluid camera-style. If the material itself had been really first-class the result would indeed have been memorable. As it was, the play was weakest in what should have been its strongest scene — the " brain-washing " interview between political prisoner and prison-governor — and the total effect suffered accordingly.

The Douglas Fairbanks films continue on I.T.V., some good, some particularly poor, but the interesting thing is their contact, however slight, with contemporary life and problems. Even such an unlikely subject as Gogol's *The Overcoat* was turned into a present-day problem-film with Gogol's tragic hero becoming a revolutionary whose action in ordering a new coat led to the overthrow of a tyrannical government. With Buster Keaton as the revolutionary this production was one of Fairbanks' best.

B.B.C. features usually score heavily over I.T.V.'S, and a rewarding scoop was the Columbia film of the sinking of the Andrea Doria with pictures of the ship going down and recorded interviews with rescued passengers. *Report from America* on the Democrat and Republican Conventions was most entertaining, topical and instructive. *First Novel*, one of those fictionalised documentaries that suit the medium well, was particularly successful, neatly combining fact and fiction in its story of a young man's struggle to have a novel published. There is an I.T.V. feature called *This Week* which is improving week by week, and has the most lively coverage of news on either channel.

NEW BOOKS

Empire of Fear by Vladimir and Evdokia Petrov (Andre Deutsch, 10s.).

IT is difficult to overcome a feeling of revulsion when reading this book. Here are two people who served in no mean capacity in the hated secret police of the greatest tyranny of the modern world, and who would have continued in its service had not petty intrigues and jealousies at the Soviet Embassy in Canberra, coupled with the fall of Beria, caused them to fall foul of their masters. Whereupon they fled and sought asylum in the very country whose institutions they had been attempting to subvert.

They could not plead ignorance. Both knew at first hand of the injustice of Soviet rule, of the deliberate policy of the Soviet government which was the cause of mass misery and mass starvation throughout the country, of the monstrous iniquity of the recurrent purges, of the falsity of the " confessions ", and of the luxury of the privileged minority compared with the misery of the masses. Both had the opportunity to see the falsity of Soviet lies about the Russian standard of life in relation to that of the West, and both were forced to admit this to themselves. Both admit also the doubts which they always harboured on these subjects but which they prudently kept to themselves.

So great was the fear engendered by the Soviet regime, and so completely lacking was any sort of moral standard in the Soviet world, that the Petrovs and thousands like them continued to serve and seek advancement in a system of whose vileness they were well aware. It was not any moral considerations but fear for their own skins which led them to break with the Communist world.

Yet in doing so they did the West a great service. By virtue of his position at the Soviet Embassy in Canberra and his responsibility for organising Soviet espionage in Australia. Petrov was able to give the Australian Security Services much valuable information, and his revelations before the Australian Royal Commission on Espionage, and in a series of newspaper articles here in Britain, about the traitor

diplomats Burgess and Maclean forced the British Foreign Office into the grudging admission that they had been long-term Soviet agents, though no power on earth has yet been able to secure a proper investigation into the skeletons in the Foreign Office cupboard.

The Petrovs' story is therefore an interesting document. The Australian Royal Commission found them to be reliable witnesses, and there seems no reason to doubt the authenticity of the story they tell. It is a picture of life under the shadow of the hammer and sickle, of two peoples' advancement in the service of what is in fact the backbone of the Soviet tyranny, the MVD or secret police (at other times known as Cheka, OGPU, NKVD, or MGB), which Mrs. Petrov estimates employs one in ten of the Soviet population, and of the fears which dominate the life of every Soviet citizen, high or low.

This was Russia under Stalin. The new Soviet leaders would have us believe that it is not so today. For the sake of the millions suffering under Communist tyranny we must hope that the much vaunted " liberalisation " since Stalin's death is not only window dressing. Be that as it may there is little real evidence of a change of heart, merely one of tactics. The same principle, or lack of principle, rules Russia today as it did under Stalin. The fallen Beria was denounced in the same terms as Beria himself had used to denounce his predecessor, Yezhov, and Kruschev's demolition of the Stalin myth rings a little hollow when we remember that the present ruling clique of Kruschev, Bulganin, Zhukov and the rest were Stalin's bloodiest henchmen, personally responsible for carrying out his vilest crimes. *Plus ça change . . .*

PETER WALLIS

Molotov. The Story of an Era by Bernard Bromage, M.A. (Peter Owen, 21s.).

THE author of this book deserves our condolences upon his extraordinarily bad luck. No sooner had this near-Stalinist biography of Molotov been published than Kruschev, attaining that *non plus ultra* of hypocrisy which is the special preserve of Russian politicians and English newspapers, angrily denounced the crimes of his and Molotov's old master. So that *Molotov: The Story of an Era* turns out to be a bad joke.

Mr. Bromage begins by describing his hero's early career with that racy enthusiasm which one used to enjoy in *Boys' Own Paper* adventure stories ; however, he becomes increasingly reverent as Molotov grows older, his last words being to the effect that " he (Molotov) will deserve a blessed and a worthy end ". Leaving out all moral and historical considerations it can be stated that the description of character is skilful, and there are no irrelevant " popular " details such as whether the hero wears bedsocks or eats mushrooms

for breakfast. The most amusing, if scarcely creditable episode is that of " Old Stonepants " as a young man scaling the wall of a girls school and being immediately caught. Though a failure as a Don Juan, he owed his rise to power to qualities ignored by Trotsky, who once screamed at him : " You are mediocrity incarnate !" These qualities were above all a phenomenal capacity for work which alarmed even Stalin, and a single-minded monkish devotion to the creed which he professed.

Considered as " The Story of an Era " the book is of little interest, since we may find almost the same version couched in far more picturesque and viperish language in the " Short History of the C.P.S.U. (b)". The author's complacency is such that he talks of " alleged slave labour " and comments on the outrageous affair of the Russian wives : " a proud and confident nationalism could no further go !" After that I need hardly point out that Lenin's Testament is not even mentioned — Mr. Bromage, M.A., displaying his intellectual objectivity ?

R.B.

The Newcomer **by John Sykes (Hurst & Blackett 11s. 6d.)**

MR. SYKES has tried to reduce the problems of race and colour to the dimensions of a popular novel, with a London boarding house as the stage. Joseph Mbagawa, student son of an East African chief, finds life in a hostel too restrictive and moves into a house where the lodgers already include the Indian Dataya Rashandra, Mr. Pellman, a Jewish refugee, and Mrs. Gubberidge, who composes anti-Jewish doggerel to decorate the lavatory walls. Mr. Briggs, the landlord, has no racial prejudices, and welcomes the newcomer, overcoming the violent objections of his wife.

Much of the book rises above such unpromising material, and provides a serious study, not only of racial differences, but of the varied attitudes adopted by Africans in their contacts with white people. Mbagawa has saved the life of a white man and is treated as one of the family by his friend's parents and sister, visiting them on Sunday afternoon for the traditional tea ; he is a nominal Christian of the mission schools. But he has come to England to study in order to return to Africa better fitted to serve his people, and he clings to his tribal traditions, feverishly carving (in the solitude of his " bed-sitter ") a wooden image which will allay the anxieties of the spirit of his grandfather, disturbed at his voyage to England. Conflict must inevitably arise between Mbagawa and Ola Aiyedumni, the political agitator vigorously demanding home rule for all Africans, and independence from the colonialism of the English, whose speech, manners and dress he studiously imitates.

Each reacts in his own way to the clash of conflicting emotions

at work within them. The puritan traditionalism of Mbagawa is shocked by Aiyedumni's crude boasts of his " affairs " with the white women he professes to despise and against whom he warns the chief's son. But Mbagawa succumbs to temptation when the sister of his white friend visits him in his room, only to suffer from the encounter and to turn to his image for comfort.

Does Mr. Sykes realise where his characters and their problems will lead him ? Is he too skilled a novelist to state the obvious—that the merging of black and white, each with his traditional culture, in the melting pot of cosmopolitanism and a pseudo brotherhood of man, produces graver evils than racial intolerance. He has in any case refrained from reminding us that tolerance springs from mutual respect for traditional differences, not from an abandonment of all tradition, and has instead retreated into whimsy, so that the book ends on a false note of mutual admiration and apologies. From his window Dataya Rashandra (whose tolerance allows him to share his affections between his Indian wife at home and his white mistress in England) watches the landlord's daughter and Mbagawa as they walk up the street. " The truth had been acknowledged, the flame within them would shine more brightly than before." How charming, but how disappointing a conclusion to a book which set out to examine a vital social problem —and then decided that certain truths, perhaps, should not be acknowledged.

G.V.

Bach & the Heavenly Choir by Johannes Rueber (Rupert Hart-Davis, 12s. 6d.).

A POPE of the future wishes to canonise the Lutheran composer J. S. Bach, as a step towards uniting the Churches. He promotes the cause of Bach on the grounds that this giant of music imparts as intense a revelation of Eternal Verity as any giant of prophecy or contemplation. The documents relative to Bach's progress are prepared. The Pope declares before the Consistory that Bach is the Fifth Evangelist and illustrates his words on the fiddle. Before the vote can be taken, the Pope collapses and dies.

Such a racy theme should rouse all devotees of the novel of high Black Catholic tat. Gregory XIX, like Hadrian VII, has been elected as a stop-gap. There is Cardinal Platoni of longest Vatican experience, a Rampolla-figure if ever there was one ; Cardinal Hopkins, an Englishman " with bright eyes and fair hair "; a very young and handsome Venetian Cardinal in whom the Pope reposes particular trust ; and the Pope's nuns — a twoheaded Soeur Pasqualina ; in fact all the characters we have come to love from our readings in Firbank, Corvo and Peyrefitte.

But chagrin ; no blackamoors prance in and out of the Lateran, no overtones surcharge the conversation. Incredibly, no conflict either dogmatic or personal develops. Yet the fable is to be taken seriously. Not only that. We must believe that the characters in the fable themselves take their situation seriously. I could as soon believe in Pope Joan. The publishers could hardly have called the book a stodgy, maudlin whimsy, but I question whether it can properly be labelled " a joyful little work of art ".

A.J.N.

Marching with April, by Hugo Charteris (Collins, 12s. 6d.).

" GOOD enough for *Punch* " is not the insult it was before Mr. Malcolm Muggeridge gave the paper such a successful bogomoletz rejuvenation. Nevertheless, the bits of Mr. Hugo Charteris's new novel which are good enough for *Punch* are the least good parts ; fairly funny, they are not quite funny enough. Mr. Charteris's great talent is for bitterest satire ; his target here, as in *A Share of the World,* is the middle-aged, rich, well-meaning mother. He feels about mothers what Dickens felt about Squeers and Fagin and Mr. Murdstone. *Marching with April* has two of these mothers, a London one and a sporting Scotch one. The hero, an intellectual neurotic with a big income, cannot escape them. Although he deeply dislikes and despises his own mother (the London one) he unaccountably proceeds to acquire a terrible mother-in-law (the Scotch one), thus making sure that his torment shall persist down the years through the agency of the insensitive, tiresome but pretty mother-to-be, the girl who accepts his half-hearted proposal of marriage. The latter, significantly, is a war widow, with a son of six, so she is an actual as well as a potential mother.

The possessive mother-figure is the bogy of today as the aggressive father figure recedes and takes his place among the myths of the past. Those (and they are many) who suffer from what is sometimes described as mother trouble will enjoy this book.

D.M.

FAR EAST JOURNEY

1. *CEYLON*

by JOHN HAYLOCK

"THERE'S a fresh-water fountain along the aisle opposite the galley," the air-hostess said, smiling to the Indian woman swathed in brown. We had just taken-off from Baghdad. The Indian woman looked startled as she peeped out from behind her cloak ; even with the over-articulation of an air-hostess, words lik " galley " and " aisle " were difficult for her to understand. It i. possibly our insularity that prevents us from having any imagination. A little later, just after we had left Bahrein, the air-hostess helplessly asked the passengers in general the French for " a quarter to four ". One cannot expect BOAC to employ polyglot air-hostesses, but could they not employ intelligent ones ?

To arrive in Colombo in June from Baghdad is like going from a furnace to the steam-room of a Turkish bath. At the Galle-Face Hotel on the sea, discreetly out of town, one's newspaper feels as if it had come out of the bathroom, and the arms of the chairs in the huge lounges are as sticky as the backs of postage-stamps. Colombo is a city without beauty. Its centre, known as the Fort, is full of banks and department stores whose goods somehow seem to have a seedy look. The buildings are peeling, and the rickshawmen, their mouths red from the betel, look terribly down-and-out. One says to oneself : " It's the damp that makes them like this." But there are, not far away, beautiful parks and a very fine zoo whose exotic gardens are as interesting as its caged wild animals, though one can, of course, see these in most capitals. On my way back from the zoo I asked the driver of my little taxi to take me to a Buddhist temple. A priest with shaven head and off-the-shoulder saffron robe showed me into the little chapels that contained larger-than-life-size, painted

statues of Buddha. In the last chapel there was a box, just the sort of box one sees in churches in England " for the upkeep of this beautiful church ". I looked at the squatting Buddha and then at the box. The priest nodded, " Yes, you give half to temple, and half to me." Being slightly awestruck as it was the first Buddhist temple I had ever visited, I was about to put five rupees (about 8s.) into the box. " That for me," he said snatching the note, " now give five to temple." I gave him two rupees and said, " Two for you, give five to temple." One easily breaks into pidgin English. " No, five more for temple." I said, " No! " firmly and rushed out of the temple picking up my shoes that I had left at the entrance, and got into the taxi. Buddhist priests, I thought, were supposed to have no worldly possessions.

There is not much to do in Colombo once one has spent a morning going to the bank, bargaining over opals, looking at masses of ebony elephants of every shape and size in curio shops, and an afternoon seeing the zoo, the gardens and a temple. One tires of the Galle-Face Hotel with its myriads of silently-moving, white-saronged, bare-footed, over-attentive waiters, the vast dining-room with its ninety whirling fans and the orchestra that plays selections from Edwardian musical comedies at lunch-time and the popular classics during dinner, one wants to move on. Opposite the reception desk in the hall of the hotel a bespectacled Ceylonese sits behind a notice which says : " Taxis. Inquiries Here. Tours Arranged." To him I went on my second morning in Colombo and he arranged to have me driven round the island for a week, including hotels and English-speaking driver, for £40.

The driver who wore a striped sarong and no shoes called for me the next morning in a Standard Ten which had on the back the words " A Bobby Car ", for the taxi belonged to Mr. Bobby Arnolda's company. We left Colombo in the drenching monsoon rain and were soon motoring through thick tropical vegetation : coconut palms, banana trees, flamboyants in bloom, paddy fields and then rubber plantations. A rubber tree looks really like any other tree, except that the bottom part of its trunk is scarred where incisions are made to let the white latex run down into a coconut, which is emptied into a bucket by a half-naked peasant boy, or a woman in coloured cotton sari and jewelled nose.

We had to change directions and make detours several times as some roads were flooded to a depth of eight feet. This happens frequently during the monsoons, when roads become impassable in the matter of half an hour. Like most of the cars that run over them, the

roads are also English ; they are narrow and winding, but the surface is good, and there are A.A. boxes with information, and modern petrol stations everywhere.

We stopped for lunch at a rest house in the hills near a village called Balangoda. The wind was high, and the rain pelting ; it was pleasantly cool. An Englishman was also having the curry that was the only item on the menu.

" It's cold up here," I ventured.

" Yes, it's monsoon time," he said and gave an inane laugh that was quite disturbing.

" I'm doing a short tour of the island."

" Not the best time to see Ceylon."

" Why ? "

" Politics. It's all politics now." Again that laugh, and he went out, got into his little car and drove off through the swaying dripping palms.

I supposed that he remembered with regret the old days, the days when there was a Governor-General and not an independent regime that is determined to make Ceylon a republic within the Commonwealth, and to turn out the British from their bases. We gave Ceylon efficient government, of that there is no doubt. But the peoples of Asia want to rule themselves, and the people of Ceylon returned the Socialist Prime Minister S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike because they believed he would give them more independence. At the moment, after three months in power, he is popular with the Sinhalese youth, and with those who think he is sincere in his desire to improve conditions, but he is not liked by the die-hards who are inclined to belittle his efforts and regard them as extreme nationalist manifestations that might be dangerous.

We left behind the palms, the rubber trees, the swirling brown rivers and went up into the tea-country. " The best tea is high tea," the driver said pointing to the hills covered with tidily planted tea bushes, and the big white three-storey buildings dotted here and there. " Are those hotels ? " I asked. " No, they are the tea factories. Each estate has a factory so from here you can see the different estates."

We were now climbing steeply and one needed a pullover as well as a jacket. At about tea-time we arrived at Nuwara Eliza, over 6000 ft. above sea-level, and a resort. We drove through the English scene, past the perfectly kept golf-course where Anglo-Saxons were playing in the rain, up the drive of the Grand Hotel, past beds of

antirrhinums, to the front door where we were welcomed by the English manageress. In the lounge two English families were having tea round the fire ; in the writing room there was an ink-pot made out of a small silver bust of Queen Victoria. Looking out of the window on to the lawns and trees at the gentle drizzle one could have been in a hotel in the New Forest. Thanks to the climate, the English have been able to re-create England among the tea-covered hills of this tropical island. After dinner I talked to an Englishman who had spent 45 years in Ceylon and had retired to the Grand Hotel ; but his only interest was the Test Match, a running commentary on which was coming through a crackling radio. Someone was out, Archer was going in, but due to the interference we couldn't quite hear the score. I felt sorry for the old man listening with his hand to his ear. I wondered why he didn't go back to England and see the Test Match.

" I hope you'll be able to get to Kandy," the manageress said as I was leaving. " The rains have been pretty heavy and some people couldn't get through yesterday. We must expect this weather at this time of the year."

We did reach Kandy, but during the last part of the drive through a valley I thought we might be submerged at any moment. The rain was torrential, the river was visibly rising, and water poured down from the hills into the road.

As we crossed the bridge over the Mahaveli river outside Kandy the driver said, " To save coming back tomorrow we will visit the botanical gardens and the site of the Peradesiza University, the new University of Ceylon, now." We drove round the gardens, full of the most wonderful flowers, shrubs, and trees of all descriptions ; mahogany, ebony, the Taliput palm that grows for fifty years, then suddenly produces a flower and dies. There was a tree planted by the Czar in 1891, and others by almost every member of the British Royal family. The Queen, of course, planted one in 1954. Earl Mountbatten who had his headquarters in the gardens during the war planted one in 1945, but it didn't seem to be doing very well. On the other side of the road the new buildings of the university are springing up, and will soon encroach on to the golf-course, which will have to go. As sad a fact to some who have memories " of many a good round on Kandy golf-course," as that of the British navy soon having to leave Trincomalee is to others. A sign of the times, nevertheless.

Just as I had installed myself in my very comfortable room at the Queen's Hotel that looks over the beautiful lake at Kandy, there was

a rap on my door. It was the driver.

" Come quickly, sir," he said. " Tooth on display." I had read that the famous tooth-relic of Buddha was only shown once a year to the public, so I hurried off to the Temple of the Tooth. The entrance to the small octagonal shrine was crowded with pilgrims bearing temple-flowers (plumeria) and lotus flowers on leaves. I joined the throng, but was soon taken in charge by a guide who kept saying, " Hurry, hurry, tooth relic on display. Take off your shoes. Hurry." We rushed up the stairs into a room, and then up another flight into the place where the relic was on show. Peasants in sarongs and saris pressed round the glass case with their hands in the position of prayer. I hesitated at the edge of the crowd. " Go on, go and have a look," urged the guide. I pushed my way in and peered at a large brown tooth clasped in golden pincers. But at that moment drums started to beat below, and a reed pipe wailed. " Come down quickly: they remove relic." I was hustled away and soon found myself outside feeling rather breathless. I had anyway seen Buddha's tooth, one of the holiest relics in Ceylon.

However jaded one is, one cannot help feeling a little excited at the sight of one's first non-zoo elephant. We came across one ambling along the Upper Lake Drive at Kandy and I got out of the car to take a photograph. But the domestic elephants of Ceylon are as conscious of the camera as their owners. The peasant jumped down from its back, made it sit up and waggle its front paws, and then asked for money. One has to pay for being a tourist. Later in the day we saw some more elephants bathing in the river, but this is such a famous sight for the tourist to Kandy that I pretended not to be fascinated at the huge beasts being scrubbed with coconut husks by their almost naked keepers.

It teemed with rain all the time I was in Kandy so I was confined to the hotel where one only has to raise one's eyes from one's book for a split second to have five waiters at one's elbow whispering : " Master like whiskysoda ? Master like German beer ? " I was not sorry to leave the old capital of Ceylon and motor down into the dry forest plains where at Sigiriya, only 54 miles away, they had had no rain for nine months. The rest-house, run by a retired English Wing-Commander and his Ceylonese wife, looks straight on to the huge granite rock for which Sigiraya is famous. In the fifth century A.D. King Kasyapa went to live on top of this enormous 400 ft. high rock, after murdering his father. Whether he did this through fear of his brother, or because of a strong guilt feeling combined with a

desire to escape from life, is not known. The driver and I climbed up the rock in the afternoon, on the way looking at the remarkable frescoes of big-breasted women painted high up on the side of the rock (these frescoes have been compared with those of the Ajanta caves in India). Half way up (there are steps all the way) there is a ledge of a fair size and a notice which says: "Beware of the bees. Do not ring bells or make a noise." We neither rang bells, nor made a noise, but as we started to climb the iron ladder that goes to the top we were attacked by some of the bees that hang like black baskets on the side of the crag. They made straight for us, settling on our arms and stung. We retreated hastily trying to brush the bees off, but it wasn't until we had gone down some way and got into the wind that they left us. The spirit of King Kasyapa must still live, and his guardians, the bees, see that some people do not pry into what was once his impregnable redoubt.

I was the only guest at the rest-house. I slept in room No. 4 which was only next to the one the Queen rested in on her visit to Sigiriyah. The dinner was like all rest-house and hotel dinners in Ceylon : soup, fish, meat, pudding. The dining-room on the veranda was pleasant, and as each course was served the waiter whispered what it was : " This is soup, sir," and then, " This is fish, sir." After the meal the lights were switched off, one by one with a loud click, and then in the dark was brought a pancake with rum poured over it on fire. I was rather touched. I offered the ex-Wing-Commander a drink after dinner. " No, thanks," he said, " I only have one large gin and water a day." He talked about the high consumption of fuel of the modern plane, of the curviture of the earth, and how mad it was of the Ceylon Government not to move their airport from Colombo to a place in the north of the island with an unpronouncible name known as K.K.S. " It would save 400 miles on the flight to Australia," he said, " and Ceylon Airways could do a ferry service to Colombo."

We motored on to Polannaruua, another ancient capital of Ceylon, passing through jungle country, dry forests. Notices put up by the Department of Wild Life saying " No Shooting " kept one awake, but we only saw troops of black-faced monkeys scampering across the road as we passed.

The twelfth-century ruins of Polannaruua are scattered about the jungle and we motored round them all : temples, highly decorated with stucco figures with a mutilated standing figure of Buddha inside, *dagobas*, bell-shaped buildings of brick that house treasures and

relics, and most impressive of all, the most beautiful pieces of sculpture in Ceylon at the rock-cut shrine, Gal Vihara. Carved out of a granite ledge in the jungle are three huge figures : Buddha, sitting in contemplation, Buddha recumbent, Buddha with his disciple, Ananda, at his side.

The rest-house is on the lake, or rather on the reservoir built by the King who so wonderfully adorned his capital. The lake, ingeniously fed by a distant river, was once the main supply for an extensive irrigation system which the Government is now trying to restore. The rest-house manager, a Ceylonese, received me with smiles and led me triumphantly into Bedroom No. 1. " This is the Queen's room," he said, conferring on me the greatest possible honour. There were two small single beds.

" Which bed did she sleep in ? " I asked.

" Oh, her bed has been taken away."

" To the museum ? "

" No, it was sent back to the company that lent it."

As I was having a bath, revelling in the thought that perhaps " Queen Elizabeth bathed here," some Indian tourists burst in to see the " Queen's room " which has become one of the " sights " of Palannatuua alongside the twelfth-century ruins, more interesting to some, no doubt, than a *dagoba*, or the remains of King Parakrama Bahu's seven storey palace.

This year is the 2500th anniversary of Buddhism, and Ceylonese pilgrims have been busy visiting the various holy places. They arrive in buses, on bicycles, or in their private cars flying the multi-coloured Buddhist flag. One cannot help feeling a little envious of these pilgrims for although obviously most devout, in between prayer and meditation they seem to enjoy themselves. The trip is a picnic as well as pilgrimage.

Anuradhapura is the holiest city in Ceylon, and there are many places that a pilgrim must visit, there is much for him to do. He should climb the 700 steps up Mount Mihintale where Prince Mahinda, the missionary son of King Asoka, converted the King of Ceylon to Buddhism in 307 B.C. He should meditate before the imposing sedent Buddha in the jungle (the day before thousands of pilgrims had sat meditating in the forest). He should worship before the *dagoba* where Buddha's collar bone is buried ; and the other white-washed 2000-year-old *dagoba*, called the Mahathupa, with elephant heads all round its walls. And then the most holy shrine of all, the place where the sacred Bo-tree stands, a cutting from the

same Bo-tree under which Buddha attained Enlightenment, which was presented by the nun-daughter of King Asoka to the Ceylonese King. Several other Bo-trees stand in the courtyard, in the centre of which is a platform round the 2250-year-old holy tree. Constantly pilgrims were buying temple flowers at the entrance and placing them on little temples. Monks, and nuns who have shaven heads and look exactly like the monks, were everywhere in this holy town. Near the Mahathupa *dagoba* we saw the saffron robes of a priest hanging round a tree like a tent.

" What is that ? " I asked.

" A monk is inside fasting in order to make people follow the teachings of Buddha better. He tried before but he was stopped, but now he says he'll fast until he dies."

" Does he eat or drink nothing ? "

" People bring him water and orange juice," my driver continued. " But it is silly. Why fast ? People are free to do what they like. Now we must go to another temple." I sighed. " It's the last one. It's called the Rock temple."

I obediently got into the car and we motored off. In the courtyard of the Rock temple, a temple built in the cleavage between two large lumps of granite, was a side-show, some relics of Buddha presented by Burma to Ceylon were on display. We were enticed to the tent by a boy shouting down a microphone, just like the " walk up, walk up " at a fair. Inside was an old man explaining the relics to a group of pilgrims. When he had finished he beckoned us to approach along the roped " entrance " gangway. Under an angle-poise lamp in a glass case were five glass capsules each containing two tiny pellets ; behind in two rows, one above the other, in a glaze of light were gold statues of Buddha, also presented by the Government of Burma. I gazed at it all, not comprehending. I put a rupee in one of the brass plates and the old man snorted.

" What did he say ? " I asked the driver.

" He said you didn't give enough."

" What exactly were the relics ? "

" Holy relics of Buddha."

" But what were they ? "

" In the glass case ; those round things come from the bones of Buddha. The money is for a new *dagoba* in which they will be buried."

" Including the gold statues ? "

" Oh, yes."

At that moment a group of pilgrims arrived led by an old man carrying tenplix-flowers on a leaf. He didn't know the way, and led his followers up a flight of steps at the side that led nowhere. Someone noticed his mistake, he laughed, came back and went into the Rock temple, the younger men of the group with flowers, the women with candles and bottles of oil. This pilgrimage meant a lot, but all the same it was fun.

Back in Colombo, it was raining. A further walk round the centre of the city did not endear it to me ; the countryside is much pleasanter and so are the country people. A P. and O. ship was in, and the passengers were wandering about the filthy streets that are splashed with red stains from the expectorating betel chewers. " Come inside," the curio-shopowners shout at me. And as I pass they whisper, " Wanna change money, sir ? I give you good rate." In the Pettah district which is a maze of small shops and pavement stalls, crammed with people, hawkers pester and pimps shout : " How long you got ashore ? When your ship sail ? I got one nice girl." I take no notice, but they trail me for ten minutes in the hope that I shall weaken. After dinner at the Galle-Face Hotel I go out towards the wide expanse of grassland that borders the sea, to get a breath of air. As I leave the hotel the doorman warns : " Don't go far master, many bad people out there."

" How are they bad ? " I ask curiously.

" They rowdies, master. Only yesterday one English master go for walk out there and one rowdy come up and take his money, and cut his watch off with knife. He wounded, sir."

" Don't the police do anything ? "

" Since this independence, sir, police no good ; police take money. Since independence, Ceylon no good."

That is only the view of a doorman who perhaps had a better job under the British. But as in all newly independent countries Ceylon needs a strong Government with an honest and hard-working civil service behind it. Mr. Bandaranaike and his inexperienced ministers may provide this. Just before leaving for the Commonwealth conference in London the Prime Minister saw his Sinhalese-only bill passed by the Lower House. This bill upset the Tamil-speaking minority, who staged a demonstration on Galle Face green that was broken up by Sinhalese who then sacked Tamil shops in the Pettah district. Order was quickly restored, and the debate on the bill continued. At the moment Sinhalese, Tamil, and English are the official languages. The Tamils naturally object to their language

becoming unofficial ; the English can do little about the fate of theirs, but it is certain to remain the first " second " language of both groups. Many Ceylonese speak excellent English, and the educated, as in India, often converse in it among themselves. I heard part of a murder trial in Kandy and the entire proceedings were in English.* The counsel for the prosecution interrogated the police witness in English, the judge in red robes and wig, made, in a sing-song but correct English, the usual sort of banal jokes that judges make in England. However, the two young brothers who were accused of murder sat in the dock not understanding a word of what was going on. The switch over to Sinhalese in law courts and universities will take time, but it's a change that the typhoon of nationalism blowing across Asia must bring.

Criticism of the Prime Minister, and cartoons poking fun at him, appear in the *Ceylon Daily News* and the *Times of Ceylon*, and other English newspapers. Like Nehru, Bandaranaike, trained at Oxford, believes in democracy and freedom of speech. One can only pray that such liberty given to an undisciplined people will not allow the small Communist Party, that already controls some of the unions (including one of the dockers' unions that is always slowing up the unloading of ships) to become too powerful. Also that the economic aid offered by Eastern Europe (aid is already received from the Colombo Plan countries) will not, with its consequences, destroy the democracy, independence, and freedom of speech that Mr. Bandaranaike so earnestly desires.

Colombo, July 1956.

* Accused are given the option of being tried in Sinhalese, Tamil or English. They usually choose English as they think they get a fairer trial in that language.

LETTERS

EUROPEAN SOCIALISM

To the Editor of *The European.*

Sir,

In his reply to my recent letter in your periodical Mr. Gibson suggests that I am " unaware of the facts relating to industry in England." Perhaps, Sir, I do fall into this category but, from the contents of Mr. Gibson's letter, I feel that, in this respect at least, we are both in the same boat.

I shall, for the sake of argument, accept the contention that " thousands of absentee shareholders are in a position to elect the board of directors of a company ". Now, the main purpose of investing money in any enterprise is to obtain as high a dividend as possible. Therefore, if one or more directors in a company pursued a financially unsound policy, they would certainly not be re-elected to the board. The same would, presumably, apply to the managers and directors of a syndicalised industry, so that from a purely logical standpoint the absentee shareholders are quite as capable of electing an efficient board of directors to protect their financial interests in a company as would be the workers in a syndicalised industry.

Mr. Gibson's definition of a worker as anybody from " a floor-sweeper to a managing director " is a typical example of vague left-wing egalitarianism. This I'm-as-good-as-you-are attitude is nothing more or less than an inverted type of snobbery. The great difference in responsibility between the manager and the floor-sweeper immediately separates them into different categories. (In the hope of avoiding Mr. Gibson's wrath I use the word category instead of class — I too disapprove of the archaic English class system.) The fact that one man can achieve a position of great responsibility whereas another never advances beyond the level of an ordinary worker immediately differentiates between the two people : both are absolutely essential in industry but they can never be equal. Taking an example from another sphere, I am sure that your correspondent would not suggest for one moment that the vote of a labourer was equal to that of, say, a university professor. Rather than Mr. Gibson's egalitarianism it would be far better " to give opportunity to all but privilege to none and to give great position only to great service " and, I might add, great ability. Such a system would inevitably lead to the formation of an aristocracy any member of which would, in the words of Lord Lothian " put more into life than he takes out of it ".

My doubts as to whether the workers are capable of electing men (and women) to directorial posts has been completely avoided by your correspondent in a not particularly subtle way.

Furthermore, it is impossible to comment on his remark that it is important to him " to accept the moral justice of syndicalism " because such phrases appear impressive on paper but in the final

analysis mean precisely nothing unless they are closely defined in the particular context in which they are used. It is Mr. Gibson's loss that he can accept such vague ideas with such trusting naivete : I hope, Sir, that he will be spared a rude awakening.

Yours, etc.,

W. G. SHIPLEY.

Schafweide 73,
(17a) Mannheim.

KING LUDWIG'S PALACES

To the Editor of *The European.*

Sir,

How it rejoiced one to see the tribute paid to that brilliant and gifted monarch, Ludwig II of Bavaria, in your current number. The accepted (and only too acceptable) lies about his supposed madness put about by his enemies, and still repeated, in a recent book published here, one was mighty glad to see pilloried ; these calumnies had long since been exposed in Germany by Mr. Ernest Newman, whose knowledge of the Wagner-Ludwig connection is unsurpassed.

The fact is that the cultural debt the world owes to Ludwig von Wittlesbach, both for his exquisite palaces, as your contributor so ably shows, and for his patronage and support of Wagner without which it is perhaps not too much to say that the later and greater works of this Master could never have been brought to completion, and production in the theatre of his own designing, is incalculable. His enemies of course say that the reason for this was that he was unisexual and fell in love with Wagner. One can only be too thankful that he had the good taste to do so, since the object of his passionate devotion was one of the most towering geniuses the world has ever known, a man of overwhelming personality, boundless fascination and charm, who completely bowled over the brilliant romantic ardent youth.

That Wagner himself fully realised the nature of the emotion he aroused in the young King's heart, there seems no doubt at all from his own description of their first meeting, quoted by the famous German specialist, Dr. Albert Moll, in his *Berühmte Homosexuelle*, and for all that he himself was " normal ", expressed himself as deeply touched and moved by it. That immense mind with its vast breadth of outlook and tremendous knowledge, was not going to react with the "correct" disgust, horror and all; it was hardly to be expected that the author of " The Art-Work of the Future " was so stupid as that.

Of course there were the usual denunciations of " royal extravagance " against Ludwig for his building activities, as there always are against any monarch of discrimination and taste who sets himself to enrich his country artistically. Remember the " puritanic " denunciations of Charles I for his farsighted and enlightened purchase of Mantegna's greatest work, " The Triumph of Caesar " in the Orangery at Hampton Court, and the other collections of pictures

he made. We have recently seen another example of this mean-minded abjectness in the impudent campaign against the Royal Family on the ground of extravagant expenditure in a certain notorious Sunday rag. An appeal to base envy and grudging malice is always sure of success in a " democracy " where the expenditure of a few paltry thousands by its Royal Family for the right and proper purpose of maintaining the dignity of its position is attacked, but the utterly monstrous waste of hundreds of millions annually of the nation's purchasing power on interest payments to the Financial System for nothing more than the wear and tear on the nib and the ink used to write rows of figures in ledgers leaves all such completely unmoved. One can quote the highest banking authority in support of the statement—which one of them has made—" Banks create the means of payment out of nothing ", without the slightest effect ; the robbing of the community at large of vast sums which simply disappear as " deflation ", " restriction of credit ", or some such fancy name. Royal " extravagance " never *destroyed* money in this way. And whether it be Charles I, Louis XIV, Ludwig II of Bavaria, there is something very much to show for it . . . something that even draws sacrosanct " dollars " from people who come to look.

Yours, etc,
KAIKHOSRU SHAPURJI SORABJI.

The Eye,
Corfe Castle, Wareham, Dorset.

SCIENCE FICTION

To the Editor of *The European.*
Sir,

I have been a reader of *The European* for some time, and have noticed repeated innuendos towards what is popularly known as " science fiction ".

I have been reading and enjoying science fiction right through from the one and sixpenny paper-backed volumes to the editions from high-class publishers. S-F (if I may abbreviate) is a young and vigorous branch of our literature, yet its roots go deep into our literary past. The works of Jules Verne and H. G. Wells are now becoming classics. S-F can be traced back to Homer and Plato.

Modern authors, such as Ray Bradbury, are now becoming recognised as the masters they are. In 1946, the Nobel Prize for Literature was granted to Herman Hesse for his S-F novel, *Das Glasperlenspiel.* Science fiction deals with the future, and it is pumping a stream of fresh red blood into our literary heritage.

I hope the trait of too much criticism and too little praise will not spoil your otherwise excellent journal.

Yours, etc,
ALISTAIR GRAHAM

London, S.W.6.

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